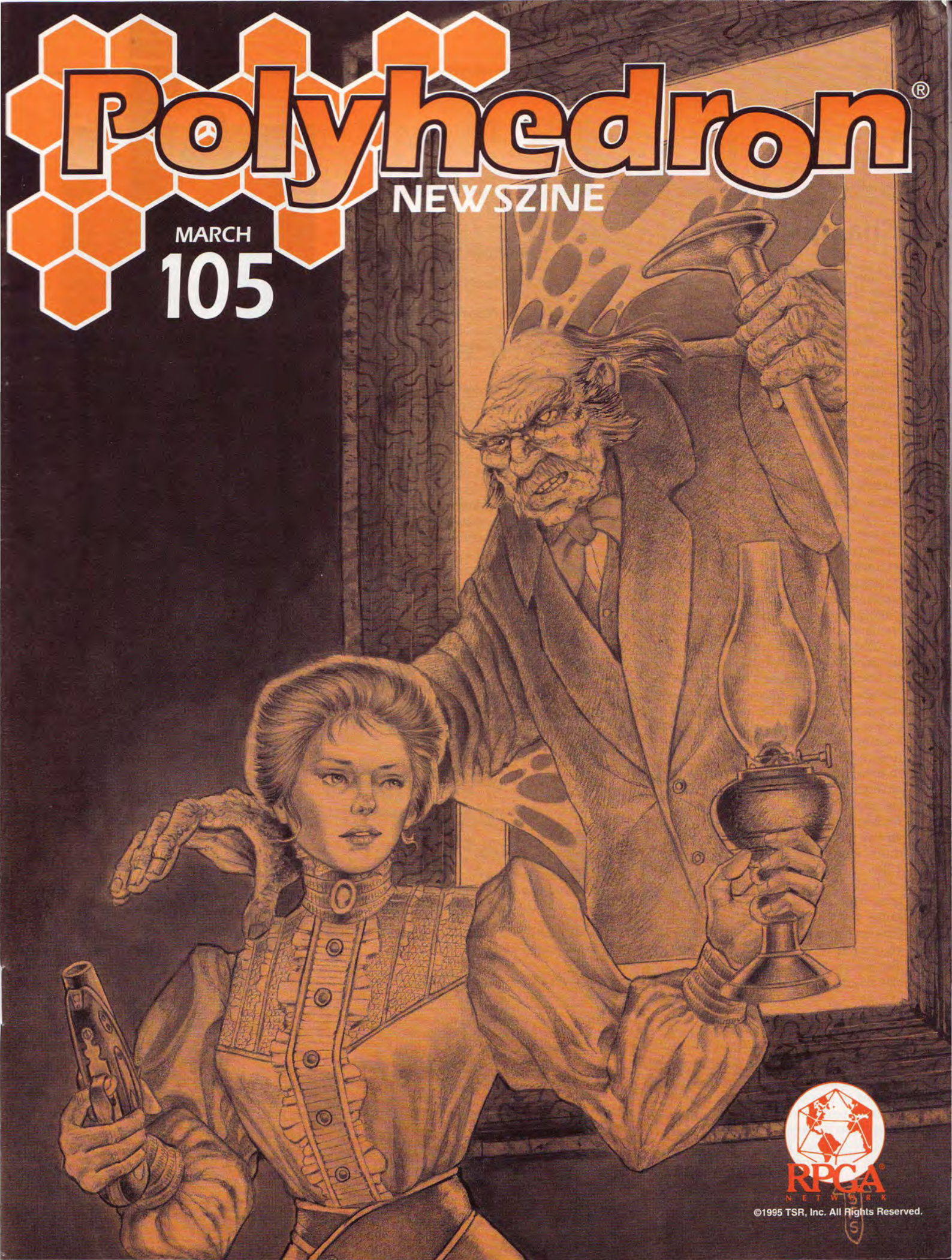
Polyhedron®

NEWSZINE

MARCH

105



RPGA NETWORK

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Notes from HQ

Changes

So how will the Newszine change now that Jean has taken on a new set of challenges in Creative Services at TSR?

Mostly, it won't.

Mostly, you'll still see the same popular columns and the same excellent features—written mostly by members of the Network who aren't professionally involved in the gaming business. Living City, Living Jungle, Virtual Seattle, and more tournament campaign settings will continue to be prominent features—most of the time. The style and format of the Newszine will remain the same. Mostly.

The only significant changes you'll see are that we'll run fewer long features to allow more room for variety, and that we'll depend on adventure hooks rather than on full-length adventures (again, for more room in these 32 pages, and also to keep from duplicating the goal of DUNGEON® Magazine).

You may also notice a little more focus on the membership itself, not just on the articles written by Network members. Jean made sure that the Letters page returned before she moved to games, and you can be sure that it'll continue to appear regularly. Classifieds and Conventions will both appear in every issue now (this is easier to do, with the return of our mailing cover and the additional pages it provides). But we need your help to increase the focus on the membership and also to determine what other changes we'll make in 1995.

If you're a convention coordinator or a member of a Network club, let us know what activities you're organizing. Send us photos and reports of some of your game days or other events. We'd also love to see more letters concerning local conventions and other gaming events.

Even if you aren't involved in conventions or a local club, let us know which features and articles are your favorites and which you could live without—and why. And if you'd like to send a letter to any of the writers who appear in these pages, we'll be glad to forward them. You'll probably even get a personal response. (Especially from Roger Moore. The poor fellow shows up here every day, asking if he's gotten any more mail.)

As ever, the Network remains *your* organization. Don't hesitate to let us know how you'd like it to evolve.

Submissions

We're always looking for new submissions to the Newszine, but we've been seriously backed-up since last summer. By the time you're reading this, we will likely be caught up again, but we'll also have most if not all of this year's issues scheduled with articles from previous submissions. But don't let that discourage you, because there are two kinds of submissions we'll always be able to fit into the Newszine.

Short (especially one-page) submissions have a better chance of acceptance and publication simply because they are easy to fit into an otherwise crowded issue. The trick, of course, is to write something both interesting and useful in a single page. A Newszine page consists of approximately 800 words.

Articles involving just-released or very popular TSR settings are also a good bet—again, especially if they are short. Since popularity changes so quickly with new releases, watch the letters page to see which settings other readers especially want to read about.

Art and cartoon submissions are also very welcome, and jokes, riddles, puzzles, or other short items could be very interesting. Be sure that whatever you submit comes with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a completed Standard Disclosure Form (which you can get for just a SASE).

Cheers,

After reviewing tournaments run across the country in 1994, HQ has decided to eliminate multi-round tournaments from the Living City Program. This is not a decision made lightly, since there are many good two- and three-round events which have been written. The primary reason for this decision is the lack of requests from conventions for these tournaments once they're sanctioned. HQ has a host of multi-round LC events which have played only one or two times, in contrast to one-round events which can easily be sent to more than a dozen conventions. It is no longer time-effective for HQ to sanction events if they only play at one convention.

In the future, authors wishing to draft multi-round LC tournaments must write each round as a stand-alone event. Take the *Menagerie* series as an example (*Call of the Griffin, Wizard's Reunion,* and *Pillar of the Community* were three of these events). These modules were each one-round tournaments, and if you happened to play in all of them you discovered the truth regarding a subplot from each adventure. If proposed LC events are written in this fashion, HQ can send them to several conventions as opposed to one.

With the departure of multi-round Living City events, HQ will now allow conventions to draw more LC events from our files. The submission ratio (one per day of the convention) will remain the same. However, convention coordinators can now draw two Living City events from our files for every day of their show. This will also give the new Living City player a chance to experience events other members enjoyed over the years.

Canadian Convention Concern

Several tournaments run at recent Canadian conventions were not approved by HQ. These tournaments, which were all Living City events, were not requested to be run and did not satisfy the Network's tournament fee. As a result no points will be awarded for these events played at Windsor Gamefest (July 8-10 at the University of Windsor), Watsfic (July 16-17 at the University of Waterloo), and Last Minute Con (Aug. 6th at Fanshawe College). Since there is currently no Regional Director for Canada, convention coordinators must deal directly with HQ to obtain RPGA Network events.

Kevin

About the Cover

Steven Schwartz graces our cover again, this time with a portrait appropriately entitled "Surprise!"

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If your mailing label reads

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Polyhedron® NEWSZINE

Volume 15, Number 3
Issue #105

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From fiction and history, these stalwart heroes defy the horrors of the *Masque of the Red Death* campaign setting.

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The place to become an illustrated man—or elf, or dwarf, or gnome, or ...

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Send your letters to: POLYHEDRON Newszine, 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva, WI, 53147. Or send us e-mail at TSR.RPGA on the GEnie information network, or tsr.rpga@genie.geis.com via Internet.

Forgotten Deities

Garagos the Reaver, "Master of All Weapons"

by Eric Boyd

Power: Lesser (formerly Greater)
Plane: Pandemonium
AoC: War, Destruction, Plunder
Align: CN (E)
WAL: any
Symbol: Circle of five blood-red swords, points outward
Sex: (Fe-)Male

Garagos the Reaver, a scarlet-cloaked, war god destroyed by Tempus, was worshiped in Westgate and the Vilhon during the days of Myth Drannor. Some legends claim Garagos was the primary war god in western Faerûn until overthrown by the upstart Tempus. These same tales tell that Garagos gained his position by slaying an even older, unnamed war god.

Although Garagos' portfolio included the sphere of war, he was associated more with the rampaging destruction and plunder of war than with tactics, strategies, or armies. "The Reaver," as he was known, was linked with the mad bloodlust that overtakes some warriors. Followers of Tempus claim their god destroyed Garagos by using the Reaver's berserking fury against him.

In painting and sculpture, Garagos was portrayed as a many-armed giant wielding a different weapon in each hand. Now he is more often depicted as wading through a blood-red sea.

For centuries, sages have believed Garagos was truly destroyed, despite the existence of a few small cults in his name along the southern coast of the Sea of Fallen Stars and the Vilhon Reach. Since the Time of Troubles, however, a new cult of Garagos has emerged in the Vilhon Reach. The village of Gosra, located in the fields of Nun of central Chondath, was destroyed in a single night during the Time of Troubles by a gigantic multi-armed man who swept through the village in a bloody rampage. Every able-bodied warrior who tried to fight the monstrous warrior was destroyed. No physical or magical attacks seemed to affect "the Reaver," as the warrior was labeled.

Following the Time of Troubles, a young priest built a temple in the center of the ruined village, hailing the return of Garagos the Reaver. Although the priest was quickly killed by agents of the clergy of Tempus, warriors have flocked to the old battlefields surrounding Gosra, and many self-proclaimed priests of Garagos have begun preaching his return. The established churches of Tempus are rumored to be hiring a massive army of mercenaries to destroy this nascent movement, although they are thought to be secretly concerned about defections in any army they send to destroy this well-armed cult.

Unbeknown to the followers of Garagos or those of Tempus, Garagos remains dead. An enterprising marilith known as Glackzana found herself trapped in Faerûn during the Time of Troubles after being summoned from the Abyss by a foolish wizard. She seized the opportunity to build a cult of worshippers and establish a power base in the Realms, impersonating Garagos during the destruction of Gosra, Glackzana seeks enough power to become a tanar'ri lord in her own right. She believes she can achieve her goal by building a sizeable base of worshippers in the Prime Material Plane. It is unlikely that Tempus will stand idly by and let the tanar'ri build up worshippers at his expense.

Garagos's Priests

The followers of "Garagos the Reaver" are concentrated almost exclusively in the Fields of Nun in central Chondath in the Vilhon Reach and include warriors, a few rogues, and a couple of fallen priests of Tempus. Although a few "priests" of Garagos have emerged, currently they are very limited in their powers. Like the followers of Tchazzar (see *FR10 Old Empires*), priests in the cult of Garagos are likely to achieve additional powers over the next few centuries if the cult survives the wrath of Tempus and his hordes; likewise, Glackzana is likely to achieve increased powers in the same time period.

Requirements: AB Wis 9; AL CE; WP any; AR any; RA any; SP All*, Combat*, War * (first and second level spells only); SPL nil; PW 1) *incite berserker rage* 1/day (see PHBR3); TU nil; QS nil.

Letters

Old Business and New

RPGA Network HQ,

Hi! Let me begin by saying I thoroughly enjoy POLYHEDRON® Newszine. It is fantastic, and the adventures are always fresh and thought-through. The articles are enjoyable and imaginative.

However, I would like to see more science-fiction adventures and stories for games like *Star Wars, Aliens, Rifts, Shadowrun, BattleTech, Gurps,* and BUGHUNTERS®, just to name a few. But please don't omit any current adventure's stories, editorials.

Charles Herandez
Austin, TX

Thanks for your kind words, Charles! And thanks even more for your input—we'd like to see even more letters letting us know what sorts of articles members would like to see in these pages. Letters from readers have a great deal of influence on which sorts of articles we print in the Newszine.

Unless we hear from more members who want to see more science-fiction features, we'll continue to have only one SF feature every month or two—but don't forget Roger Moore's Living Galaxy articles, which provide great advice for all role-playing campaigns, but especially science-fiction settings.

Next month you can expect another BUGHUNTERS® feature, and in the next few months you'll see both Star Wars *and* Shadowrun *features.*

If any of you would like to see more or different SF articles, just send us a letter or e-mail message. (Roger wouldn't mind some more mail, either; he's been moping all year about not getting enough letters lately!)

Dear Jean,

Hello! I hope your Holiday was a good one!

As promised to you (too long ago), here is our winner's list for the Fantastic Technology contest. We received the necessary paperwork for everyone except Sean P. Wolfe; His entries (listed in **bold**), are the only ones which will not appear in *Fantastic Technology,* coming out in March. It'll be a 96-page, $15 book.

I'd really like to thank you and the Network for allowing us to run this contest. We got some great entries, and your encouragement made the contest a lot of fun for me!

May the Force be with you!

Bill Smith
West End Games

Living Jungle

When Katangas shapeshift into their animal form, how large are they? For example, the snake Katanga assumes the form of a boa constrictor or anaconda. I think there is quite a difference.

Could a player choose the species of animal? Could a monkey katanga be anything from a small tamarind to a large chimp? or is it a fixed choice?

Thomasina
TSR RoundTable Bulletin Board

Katanga characters can be any size which fits their size category, as noted on the MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® sheets in issue #102 of the Newszine. Beyond that restriction, they can vary in size and species—but gain no special game abilities for doing so.

Fantastic Technology Contest Winners

1st	Michael Zebroski	*Repulsor Grappling Gun*
2nd	Douglas M. Burck	*Neural Control Collar*
3rd	Matthew Silvia	*Droid Command Link*
4th	**Sean P. Wolfe**	***Mechanic's Hand***
5th	**Sean P. Wolfe**	***Celicinide***
6th	Mike Kogge	*Flesh Camouflage*
7th	Dennis F. Belanger	*Hyperdrive Compressor*
8th	Scot Eddy	*Credit Case Surprise*
9th	Jason Davis	*R2 Voice Box*
10th	Spencer E. Hart	*Med Unit*
11th	Dennis F. Belanger	*System Diagnostic Filter*
13th	Mike Kogge	*Law Enforcement Droid*
14th	Dennis F. Belanger	*Navi-Computer Bypass*
15th	Adam Rosenberg	*Chronometer w/Hidden Compartment*
16th	Mike Kogge	*Security Breach Droid*
17th	Greg Dove	*NR5 Maintenance*
18th	James R. Tews	*Versatex Survival Suit*
19th	Dale Jackson	*PX-7 Heat Sensor*
20th	Adam Dickstein	*Transport Droid*
21st	Matthew Cunningham	*Message Droid*
22nd	Dennis F. Belanger	*AV-1 Power Armor*
23rd	Tom Nevill	*Teledrive Autopilot*
24th	Jason Davis	*Wrist Chronometer*
25th	***Sean P. Wolfe***	***Infantry Support Droid***

Honorable Mentions: Dennis F. Belanger, *Combat Jumpsuit;* Scot Eddy, *Pocket Droid, Portable Clip Recharger, Laster Target Board;* Mike Kogge, *Mist Generator, Repulsor Boots;* James R. Tews, *RLG Guardian Droid;* Michael Zebrowski, *Pocket Secretary;* Sean P. Wolfe, *Security Spraycage, Tech Field Kit, Vaccsuit.*

What multi-class options are available to Living Jungle Characters?

Mark Liberman
E-Mail

This question has been one of the most frequent, since we accidentally omitted the korobokuru multi-class options on that race's MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® *sheet in our Living Jungle issue. For each of the other non-human (non-Nubari) races, refer to pages 21-25 in issue #102 of the Newszine. The korobokuru can be multi-classed fighter/thieves and fighter/priests.*

Dispel Confusion

In issue #100, we asked you to send questions for Harold Johnson's "Dispel Confusion." Here are the first of the questions, with more to follow throughout this and later issues of the Newszine.

While the contest is over, Harold's answers are never over! Keep sending in your questions, and he'll keep dispelling your confusion.

Illusion Confusion

When a character disbelieves an illusion, such as a wall at the "end" of a corridor, does the illusion disappear to that character? Or does he only know that it is not real? This could make all the difference if some hazard lies behind the illusion?

Kirk Hicks
Conway, AR

Interesting question! Let's see if we can part the veil on illusions.

First, there are two categories of magical effects commonly referred to as illusionary:

***1. Illusions,** which manipulate the ether and other arcane energy to create false images, sights, sounds, and sometimes odors. Phantasmal forces are defined as illusions.*

***2. Phantasms,** which actually alter the mental processes and make the victim believe he or she witnesses the illusionary image.*

If a creature is given cause to disbelieve the reality of an illusionary item and succeeds in making a saving throw versus spells, then the item takes on an unreal quality to the disbeliever.

In the case of an illusion, *the item becomes fuzzy and indistinct, but since it is a coloring of the air with ether or energy, it would still present a visual barrier, much the way the rays of heat create the mirage of water, even though the observer may disbelieve what he sees.*

In the case of a phantasm, *the distortion of a creature's mental perceptions, the disbelieved imaged, sound, or sensation first becomes fuzzy, as with static, and then fades away to nothing.*

Since most effects encountered in a fantasy adventure involve illusions, in most cases the result of disbelieving is that the victim's sight or senses are still obscured by a fog or static.

Hope this makes illusions less elusive for you!

—H

Lycanthropy: Double the Fun

Can a character be infected by two different types of lycanthropy at the same time if there are two different triggers?

David Haendler
Quincy, MA

Oh, tough question! The actual answer is subject to change, based on the world or realm in which the victim lives.

On the DRAGONLANCE® *world of Krynn, lycanthropy does not exist, per specific notes in the design manual and Tales of the Lance, despite the fact that it has been mentioned by name in several stories. It also appears that the* DARK SUN® *world of Athas has never shown the presence of lycanthropes. There are creatures on each world able to change form at will to that of an animal, but lycanthropy as a cursed disease is said not to exist.*

On the FORGOTTEN REALMS® *world of Toril and the* GREYHAWK® *world of Oerth, the effects of lycanthropy are said to be more of a curse than a disease; however, this curse appears to change the physical anatomy of victims to resemble their animal form. Therefore, it is my opinion that, since a body cannot resemble two different creatures in most cases, it is generally safe to assume that the curse of lycanthropy builds antibodies resisting a second infection while present.*

There is a place, however, where a character may be infected by two forms of lycanthropy. Ravenloft, the Demiplane of Dread, is a place where magic and curses are both perverted. Here, we are told, each individual creature of darkness should be treated as a unique entity with different twists on its abilities, curses, and powers than those possessed by traditional creatures of other realms. Thus, while a single creature cannot be simultaneously infected by several forms of lycanthropy in other realms, in the Realms of Terror, reality changes!

—H

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Elminster's Everwinking Eye

More Fabled Treasures of the Land of Turmish

By Ed Greenwood

Our alphabetical treasure tour of Turmish continues in this column, as Elminster (verbally) leads us by the hand through hitherto unknown (to readers of this world) communities in the forested heartlands of Turmish.

Illowwood

This forest-village is deep in the pastoral interior of Turmish, and few visitors find their way to it. It is named for a thick stand of lush shadowtop trees, the densest woods east of The Faraway (the great forest that covers western Turmish), its eastern verges not all that distant from Illowwood.

Over a hundred summers ago, the ranger Illowarr was entranced by a dryad on the site of the present village. He became a dweller-in-trees until the end of his days, somehow (perhaps with his beloved's aid) gaining the ability to *pass plant* and create a *plant door* as priests do—only at will.

Dryads have always been numerous in the area, and local legend says they guard a rich treasure—literally cartloads of moonstones—that were sunk long ago in Illow Pool, a tiny pond in the depths of the shadowtop stand.

Attempts to explore the depths of the pool have turned up empty carts and a handful of moonstones, as well as a rune-etched hand-sized stone identified as a ward-token. Somewhere in the depths of the woods lies an entrance, hidden or barred by a magical ward—and legend has been quick to whisper that the missing moonstones lie beyond. Interestingly, among the elves, this spot has always been said to hide the way into an elf-lord's hall: a lost hall of a folk now perished, in magical stasis, or withdrawn from all contact with outsiders (the tales vary on the fate of the elven household).

To add to all this is a legend shared by local gnomes and halflings: that an elven mage's secret citadel is entered near Illow Pool by gates (permanent *teleports*) that work only for those with the proper tokens or words of activation: the abode of an elven archmage powerful enough to flee from foes in Halruaa and hold them at bay, who is attended in his hidden house by gnomes (if you're listening to a gnome) or halflings (if you're hearing a halfling tale).

The truth behind all these attractive tales remains mysterious. What is certain is that more than one adventuring band has disappeared while exploring the area in the past decade—and the headless corpses of one such band were found stacked in the road near Illow Pool like so much firewood. The rush of explorative adventuring bands has lessened somewhat since word of their fate spread.

Treasure is a mighty foe; it's killed more adventurers, kings, high priests, and heroes down the ages than just about anything else.

—Halidar Thundershield, Lord of Yhep
Thoughts on the Realms
The Year of the Bloodbird

Jarthrin's Jump

This backwoods settlement serves local foresters and miners as a supply base and serves as a stop on the "smugglers' road" to Gildenglade (the way from the anchorage south of Alaghôn through Obelner's Well, and thence via Jarthin's Jump to Gildenglade and the Vilhon beyond). As such, it is the scene of many a hasty escape and shady deal, as pirates, slavers, and others not welcome in Turmish flee from business rivals or recent victims. Tales of stashed loot and missing payments (sacks of coins put in hollow trees, and the like) are common in most such places, and Jarthrin's Jump (named for a nearby cliff where a noted outlaw was executed by being hurled off the height to his death on the rocks far below) is no exception.

Some folk in "the Jump" have always been known as fences, forgers, disguise artists, and smugglers; among the folk of Turmish, the place retains an unsavory reputation ("as straight as a deal in the Jump" is a sarcastic expression still heard in everyday use in the realm).

Recently, word has spread across the land of the death of a noted adventurer, Irigul of Telflamm, in an old tomb complex somewhere under the Jump. Irigul's surviving companions claim the master thief was torn apart by a stone golem—one of six that stood in the huge main tomb chamber (still used by smugglers as a place to hide weapons and pirate contraband from "procurers" hired by coastal cities around The Sea of Fallen Stars to recover valuable cargoes that have gone missing due to known piracy).

The golems do nothing unless one is touched—whereupon they all come to life, seeking to crush any living thing in the tomb. They are animated—and directed, so they fight with intelligence, anticipating spells and co-operative attacks—by the undead will of their creator, Aragath Taltar, a priest of Talos who will not rest until all the land above is under the rule of those dedicated to

The Lord of Destruction. Aragath';s temple once stood above the tomb, but was destroyed by fearful priests of Lathander long ago. A thief present at the hurling-down of the temple spirited away a book that looked like a spell-tome. It turned out to be Aragath's diary, and it soon fell into the hands of the Uluuthin merchant family in Alaghôn, one-time contenders for the Princedom of Turmish.

The fates of three young sons of the Uluuthin family (slain while adventuring) spread the most interesting words of the diary all over the city some sixty winters ago. Aragath wrote that he intended to cheat death and would need the fortune he'd amassed in his lifetime to carry out the will of Talos. (He makes it clear that he did not trust his successors so much as to dress themselves unaided—an astute judgement, it turned out.) One of the golems has a hollow cavity in its body that contains "a coffin full of gems," and another has a secret compartment in its head (reached through the mouth) that contains a coffer holding no less than nine magical rings, as follows:

- *ring of blinking*
- *ring of feather falling*
- *ring of fire resistance*
- *ring of free action*
- *ring of protection +3*
- *vampiric ring of regeneration*
- *ring of shocking grasp*
- *ring of sustenance*
- *ring of telekinesis* (200 lbs. max.)

The only way to render the golems immobile is to utter the correct command words (one for each golem) while touching them. Unfortunately, the command words are known only to Aragath, who exists as a special undead: a wraith-like flying head and torso whose hands have a *chill touch* power and who retains the destructive battle-spells of Talos, which he had in life (as a 17th level priest). Inside his tomb, Aragath can't be turned; if disrupted or "destroyed," he will re-form in 1d10 days and vow vengeance on his slayers. He is otherwise akin to a lich in powers.

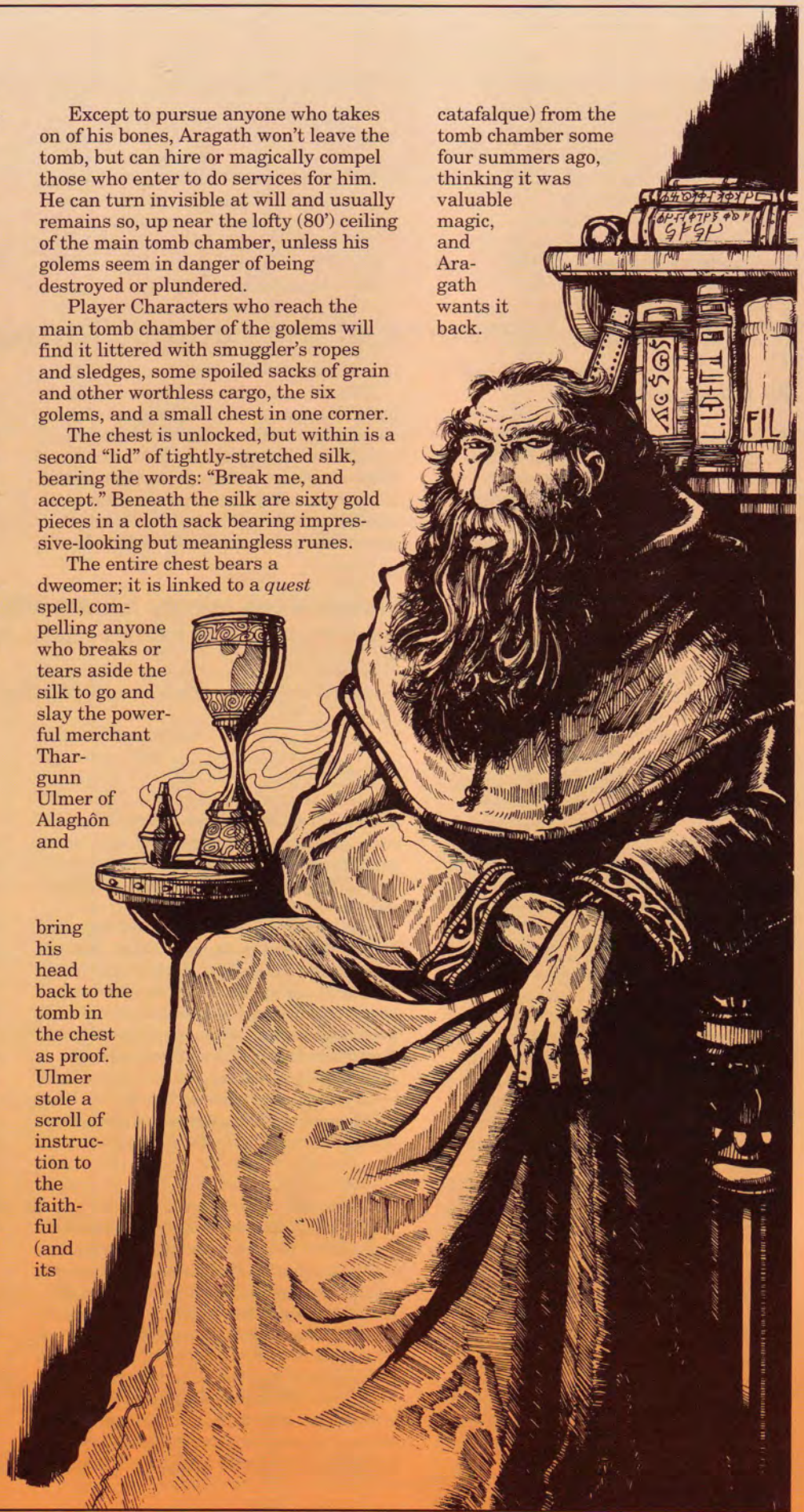
His bones are buried in the center of the chamber under a circular tile mosaic depicting a priest hurling lightning bolts and tidal waves at foes. Aragath can be destroyed forever only by reducing his bones to powder and burning them or immersing them in holy water—and their owner won't be idle while adventurers attempt this!

Except to pursue anyone who takes on of his bones, Aragath won't leave the tomb, but can hire or magically compel those who enter to do services for him. He can turn invisible at will and usually remains so, up near the lofty (80') ceiling of the main tomb chamber, unless his golems seem in danger of being destroyed or plundered.

Player Characters who reach the main tomb chamber of the golems will find it littered with smuggler's ropes and sledges, some spoiled sacks of grain and other worthless cargo, the six golems, and a small chest in one corner.

The chest is unlocked, but within is a second "lid" of tightly-stretched silk, bearing the words: "Break me, and accept." Beneath the silk are sixty gold pieces in a cloth sack bearing impressive-looking but meaningless runes.

The entire chest bears a dweomer; it is linked to a *quest* spell, compelling anyone who breaks or tears aside the silk to go and slay the powerful merchant Thargunn Ulmer of Alaghôn and bring his head back to the tomb in the chest as proof. Ulmer stole a scroll of instruction to the faithful (and its catafalque) from the tomb chamber some four summers ago, thinking it was valuable magic, and Aragath wants it back.



If intruders avoid this trap, Aragath will try directly to cast a *quest* spell on the most powerful of them, with the same aim.

Aragth has created lesser undead to serve him; 12 (normal) human skeletons, kept in a small room above the main tomb chamber. It is entered via a small opening in one dark corner of the huge chamber's roof. Aragath ferries them to and from this chamber in his hands as he flies or, if in haste, can move them by telekinesis. He can remain invisible while flying and may try to lower skeletons majestically to awe intruders—but not if he thinks they have the means to hurl a spell at the skeleton (and him!) en route.

Karthoon

This farming village sits in a little vale surrounded by rolling downlands—grazing country where the locals have reared horses and kept cattle for generations. The red-hued horses of Karthoon (known, prosaically enough, as "redhides") are broad-beamed and inelegant, but sturdy. The biggest and best of them qualify as draft or heavy warhorse animals.

Although Karthoon must see use as a waystop for smugglers (given its location on the trail inland from the nameless anchorage to Obelner's Well, and thence via Karthoon to Jarthrin's Jump), it has few "smugglers' gold" legends.

Rather, tavern-talk in Karthoon centers around the Crystal Steed, a life-sized, rearing horse carved out of a single piece of clear rock-crystal, which was given to a horsemaster of Karthoon in appreciation of the quality of his mounts by a grateful Great Lord of Unther almost a hundred years ago. Literally priceless, it would yield perhaps 400,000 gp worth of rock crystal fragments if broken up; the finest sort of crystal that readily takes and holds enchantments, and is eagerly sought after by wizards and priests all over the Realms.

The horsemaster was murdered soon after he put his gift on display in the high hall of his house—but the statue was not taken by his killer (who would have required a cart and the aid of a dozen strong men to shift it); it was missing when the slayer arrived, and many in Karthoon think the horsemaster was murdered out of the would-be thief's frustration, or because he would not reveal what he'd done with the Crystal Steed.

Magic was probably involved in the disappearance of the statue—but if any in Turmish know where it went, they're not telling. A persistent local rumor insists it did not go far and is hidden somewhere in the vale, perhaps in the very walls of The Horsemaster's House (though it's now owned by another family, the name clings to the mansion. The new owners are warriors and merchants, and they take a dim (and ready-armed) view of folk who try to invade, dig near, or chip at their house.

Lanthalal

This is truly a "lost" village—today, no one knows where it was. The overgrown and disused "back-trails" of Turmish are adorned with many barely-recognizable ruins. Some are little more than mounds that were once buildings. Others offer partial shelter for travelers—or lurking monsters. One of them, perhaps, is lost Lanthalal, the home of the Circle of Flame.

The Circle of Flame was a small, close-knit band of wizards who retired from the dangers of adventuring (in the Sword Coast lands) some ninety years ago and settled in a remote locale in Turmish.

When funds ran low, they took scrolls and potions to Alaghôn for sale—but found themselves under magical and hired-thug attack from established magic-selling wizards in the city. So the Circle hit upon the idea of a school for would-be mages.

This attracted much interest; many folk who wanted to hurl magic couldn't afford the steep fees of the established wizards of Alaghôn—but could meet the lesser demands of the Circle. By the dozens, they answered recruiting calls in Centaur Bridge and Gildenglade, safely outside the reach of the mages in Alaghôn ... or so the Circle thought.

It is now believed one of the apprentices taken on was an agent for the wizards of Alaghôn—or perhaps even one of those archmages, in disguise. Whatever the truth, the entire village of Lanthalal soon vanished in sheets of flame, rains of lightning, and convulsions of the earth-and all of its magic was swallowed up in rents that opened in the earth and then shuddered closed again—along with the wizards who fought in that titanic spell-battle.

No one tried more than once to dig up the devastated area: it had become a deadly mist-shrouded place of spontaneous wild magic, roamed by crazed wizshades (detailed in Volume 7 of the MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM®)—and all beings with the ability to work magic who entered it were drained somehow of all mastery of magic, forever! In time, the forest grew over the blasted ruins, and men forgot just where the school had been. Its wild magic and magic-draining powers may remain, but have probably faded with time—reports of strange magical discharges in Turmish are few these days.

More about the treasures of Turmish next time.

❑

Dispel Confusion

If a mage is polymorphed into some form and then is affected by a *dispel magic* spell, is he stuck in his new form? or does he *polymorph* back to his original form?

David Haendler
Quincy, MA

Easy question, easy answer. In both polymorph *spell descriptions,* polymorph other *and* polymorph self, *the rules specifically state that if a* dispel magic *is used against a polymorphed creature, the creature returns to its original form (PHB 161-162). Further, the* potion *and* wand of polymorphing *work like the spells, so their effects would also be dispelled. Finally, a permanency spell is not listed as having affect on a* polymorph *spell.*

The only situation in which I can envision dispel magic *trapping a creature in a new form is if the* polymorph *were the result of a carefully worded curse, the recipient is stranded in Ravenloft, or if the DM creates a new transformation spell-like effect with just these properties. I'd be interested in hearing the opinions of other DMs regarding possible methods.*

—H

Weapons of Reality

Secret Weapons for the *Torg* Game

by Gregory W. Detwiler

Over the millennia, and particularly during the course of the Possibility Wars on Earth, the HighLords devised various weapons and defensive devices which relied not just on their realms' respective realities, but also on the nature of reality mechanics itself. The reality bombs devised by Dr. Mobius of the Nile Empire are the most famous (or infamous), but there are many others, and all have been used by now in the Possibility Wars.

All these weapons are colored red and blue, as is the case with eternity shards, making identification of their true nature rather easy. It should be noted that only a High Lord can actually create these items, and he can also "program" them to work only for specific individuals in his employ. Thus, there is little or no chance of their unbalancing the campaign should the Storm Knights get their hands on them, as in all probability they will not be able to make them work. This holds true even if the Knight is of the same reality as the High Lord who created the device. These weapons are intended to make the Possibility Raiders tougher opponents for Storm Knights to take on, and keeping them from using them is the only real benefit Storm Knights gain by capturing them. If your characters want to destroy them, all of the weapons have a Toughness of 18 unless the specific item's description says differently.

Portranta Plants

These plants are basically defensive devices invented by Baruk Kaah, High Lord of the Living Land. However, they can also be used in the attack if the edeinos decoy an opponent into their radius and then counterattack. They are rose-sized flowers, each with a red head surrounded by petals of a rich, deep blue. Each portranta flower is like a souped-up hardpoint, in that the area within a roughly three-meter radius (10') around it is a pure zone of the reality of Takta Ker. Thus, unlike in the dominant zones around conventional hardpoints, characters from other realms cannot make use of the advantages of their own realities unless they create a reality bubble, which means spending a possibility that may be sorely needed later on. Each flower has a Toughness of 16.

Portranta flowers grow from small red-and-blue seeds. The flower takes a week to grow after the seed is planted, so advanced planning is at a premium when setting them up. Ironically, the primitive nature of the Living Land is such that the edeinos are thus unable to use these plants to their maximum potential, as careful planning is alien to most Jakatts. Still, they are quite deadly under the right circumstances. A row of these flowers stalled an entire counterattacking US Army armored division in Wyoming, and the edeinos took the offensive once the Core Earthers' weapons stopped working. There were no survivors.

Limpet Missiles

These weapons appear in all the invading realms, though their appearance may differ. They look like bullets, albeit red-and-blue ones, in all realms that have firearms (Ayslish ones look like round pistol balls, rather than conical bullets). In the Living Land, they look like spiky tumbleweeds that can be held in one's palm, then hurled at the enemy. Despite their small size, they are quite rare—and fortunately so, for they are powerful weapons indeed.

Once a limpet missile hits, it does no damage, but instead flattens out and sticks to the target. A Strength roll with a Difficulty Number of 18 is needed to remove it. Once attached, the round radiates the reality of the High Lord who created it. The moment the victim does something that would be a contradiction in the attacker's realm, like firing a gun in the Living Land or flying a plane in Orrorsh, the round is activated, briefly creating a miniature reality storm around the character. No damage is caused to the surroundings, but unless the character makes a reality roll (Difficulty Number of 18 again), he is immediately "stormed" to the High Lord's reality.

Most High Lord minions save these missiles for use against foes with higher Technological axioms than their own, though they work equally well in matters of magic and miracles. 3327 has been hoarding them almost exclusively for use against Orrorshan Horrors who invade his realm, as loss of their reality makes them ordinary creatures who may be permanently dispatched without making use of their True Death.

Stelae Rockets

Whether or not the rumors that 3327 has finally gotten hold of a Nile reality bomb are true, there is no doubt that these bombs were the inspiration for this newest weapon in the Nippon Tech arsenal. Basically, this weapon is a vehicle-mounted rocket 20' long, containing three smaller rockets inside it. A sophisticated computer system on the vehicle itself enables the firer to develop precise coordinates for the target area and program them into the missile at the last moment before firing.

In mid-flight, the rocket bursts apart, and the three smaller missiles activate their engines and fly the rest of the way to the edges of the target zone. Once there, they set down in a triangular pattern around it, just as though they were newly-planted stelae. After that, their warheads are activated, and for the next three hours, the area (two miles in extent) encompassed by the warheads will be a pure area of Nippon reality, just as though a reality bomb calibrated to Nippon axioms had gone off.

Note that the warheads operate as talismans for the rocket, so there is no danger of its disconnecting and failing if it flies into a region with a lower Tech

axiom. It has a range of 100 miles.

Thus far, 3327 has been carefully hoarding these "reality artillery" weapons for use in a possible large-scale conflict against Orrorsh. However, there are unconfirmed reports that one was field-tested in northeastern Bolivia in a joint operation with government forces. It seems that a renegade band of Akashan Coar activists tried to expand the radius of the Space Gods' realm against the Rotan Ulka's wishes. According to the rumors, what followed was the first destruction of an Akashan reality three since their arrival on Earth. Kanawa influence in Bolivia is said to have increased sharply as a result of this operation.

Both the Cyberpapacy and Tharkold are now working on their own versions of this rocket. Always willing to steal back a good idea, Mobius is doing the same, though his clumsy rocket, using archaic technology, will barely make 20 miles. After all, planes carrying reality bombs can be shot down, and few armies facing off against the World War II-era forces of the Nile bother putting antimissile systems like the Patriot in the front lines.

Reality Chamber

This device is actually a weapons-production tool, rather than a weapon itself. A weird science device of Dr. Mobius', it can hold enough soil in it equivalent to the eternium required to arm a reality bomb.

The device works as follows: First, Nile agents enter a realm of some other reality and scoop up enough soil to fill the chamber. Once this prize is brought home, it is placed in the chamber and left there for a month. After the month is over, the treated soil is poured into a reality bomb waiting to be armed. When this is done, the bomb will go off as always, with the same effects, but the reality of the pure zone created will be that of the realm where the soil came from. This means the reality in effect when the soil was scooped up, not necessarily the original one. Thus, soil taken from Florida would give off Core Earth reality, but that from Indonesia would radiate Orrorshan reality.

Mobius' main goal in inventing this item was to create weapons with which he can beat opponents like the Israelis, who have been gathering military equipment of World War II-era vintage to use when normal reality bombs go off. The soil is generally scooped from lower-tech realms, from the Living Land to Orrorsh, which means that Nile-style equipment will not function. When the bomb goes off, Mobius' troops attack with primitive weapons; note that many shock-troopers have already been trained in their use in preparation for operations in the Land Below. These bombs may also be smuggled into enemy realms and detonated in sabotage operations, where the changed reality will make the victim think another High Lord was responsible, say, when a Nippon Tech-calibrated bomb goes off in the Cyberpapacy.

The power of this device is limited by a number of factors. First, its creation was so difficult that it is only the size of the smallest wall safe, only being able to create one bomb per month. Second, because it is a weird science device which operates on realities without weird science, it cannot be used simply to make standard Nile reality bombs cheaply. Third, the process of treating the soil requires an uninterrupted month's time, so if Storm Knights open the door for even a few seconds, the batch inside will be ruined, and Mobius will have to start all over again. Still, given heavy protection, the reality chamber is a potent device indeed for lending support to limited Nile military operations. It has a Toughness of 25.

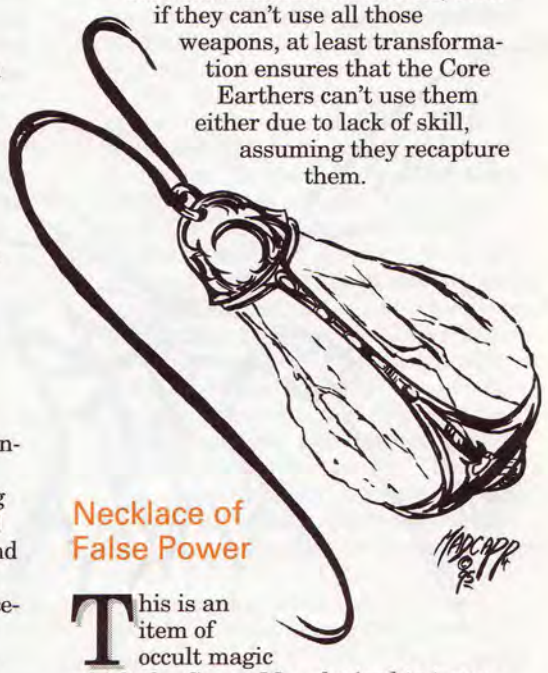
Weapon Transformers

All High Lords but Baruk Kaah (and his successor in the Living Land) use these devices. They consist of a trio of stick-like items, either runestaves or high-tech rods, depending on the cosm's reality, which are planted in a triangular pattern like stelae around a weapon, tool or vehicle from another reality. They stand straight up like fence-posts, and are two meters in height.

Once the transformers are in place, an ord of the same reality as the captured weapon will be placed in with it, and will be forced to attempt its operation. This creates a contradiction, but in this case, it is not the person who is transformed to the High Lord's reality but the item he was attempting to use. Thus, a French LeClerc main battle tank becomes a Samson hovertank, a Soviet-built SU-19 long-range jet from the former Libyan Air Force becomes a MB11-Nekata four-engined bomber, and so on. The High Lords are thus able to build up their arsenals by making use of captured equipment. After all, no one wants to rely solely on the Kanawa Corporation for his weaponry.

There are rumors of late in Aysle that the forces of the Dark have modified some transformers to disconnect the ord as well as the weapon, combining the two into one living entity. Supposedly, the Warrior's forces are combining ords with old British Army Challenger and Chieftain tanks to create more juggernauts (see Creatures of Aysle for details). If this is true, then the Dark armies will soon be much more formidable than they are now.

The only way for the weapon to be retransformed is for a captured ord from the High Lord's forces to be placed between the transformers with the weapon and forced to operate it. All transformers have been busy since the invasion began, with the Dark forces in Aysle being particularly active in turning captured assault rifles into matchlock muskets. After all, even if they can't use all those weapons, at least transformation ensures that the Core Earthers can't use them either due to lack of skill, assuming they recapture them.

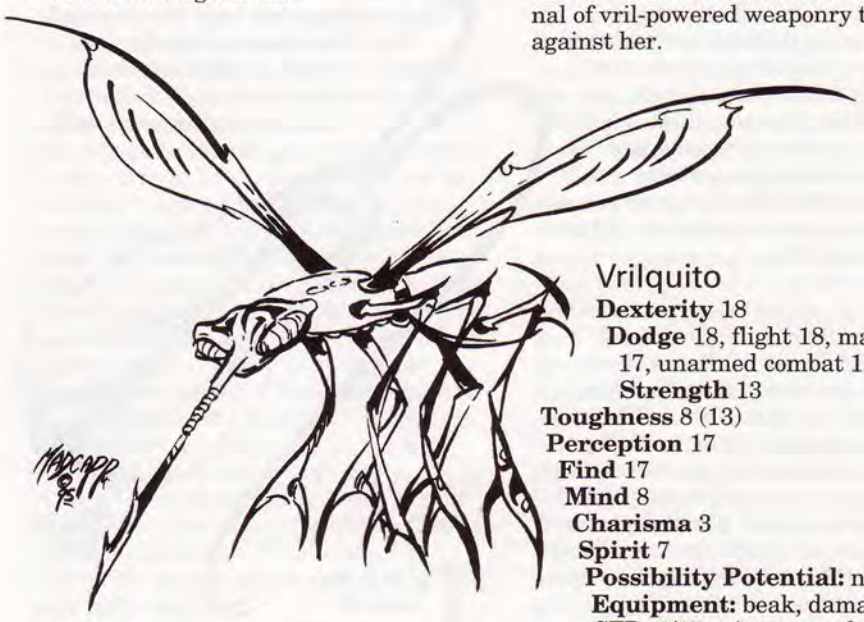


Necklace of False Power

This is an item of occult magic which the Gaunt Man devised to transform foolish characters to the reality of Orrorsh. It looks like a necklace of copper wire; the only piece of jewelry on it is a hollow, pear-shaped chunk of rare yellow jade. The item has a limited degree of sentience, and once a non-Orrorshan character picks it up, it will communicate to him that it has one special occult power, such as boiling blood, which it will bestow upon the character if he agrees to a ritual of binding between himself and the item. Note that the GM can make the promised power anything at all, whatever it takes to con the character into agreeing to the ritual, as the PC will never get it anyway.

The ritual is simple and relatively painless. All the PC has to do is lightly prick himself, let a few drops of his blood drip into the hollow gem, and then seal it up again. He must then hold it above a fire fueled by camphor for one hour, while breathing in the smoke. At the end of that time, he may put it on. When he does, he will be immediately transformed to the reality of Orrorsh. The item will then communicate to him all the knowledge that his Orrorshan equivalent would have of the realm, including the fact that items of occult magic are made to mislead idiots like him!

Because of the occult linkage with the necklace (due to having his blood sealed in it), the PC will have a +2 add to his Difficulty Number when he tries to reconnect to his old reality, unless he is in Orrorsh. In that case, he must struggle against a +4 add! Never play around with occult magic items!



Vrilquito

This Tharkoldu device is a miniature robot, shaped like an enlarged mosquito (3" length). It comes equipped with occultech sensors to detect possibility energy in living beings, and has a cybernetic "brain" that recognizes the basic human shape. Its purpose is simple: hunt down and attack Storm Knights.

When the vrilquito finds a Storm Knight, it lands on him and bites him (unarmed combat skill), inflicting unbearable agony on the character, so much so that he can take no actions in his own defense. At the same time, it is draining him of his possibilities, storing them in a built-in cell. The entire process takes one minute, at the end of which the character must make a Toughness roll of 15 or die. The vrilquito must be pulled off him before the minute is up to prevent this, with whoever does it matching his strength against that of the robot. In the case of failure by either the victim or his rescuers, he dies in such agony that his features will be permanently frozen in a tortured expression.

If the vrilquito succeeds in its attack, it flies back to the techno-demon who built it and allows the possibility energy it gained to be drained out into the vril batteries the Tharkoldu prepared as a part of the same occultech ritual in which he programmed the robot. This ceremony cannot be performed by a techno-demon alone; Jezrael must use her powers as well, thus ensuring that no rebel Tharkoldu can build up an arsenal of vril-powered weaponry to use against her.

Vrilquito

Dexterity 18
Dodge 18, flight 18, maneuver 17, unarmed combat 17
Strength 13
Toughness 8 (13)
Perception 17
Find 17
Mind 8
Charisma 3
Spirit 7
Possibility Potential: none
Equipment: beak, damage value STR+4/17; wings, speed value 17; storage cell, stores possibilities.

Because they were originally invented to harass the Race on Tharkold, vrilquitos are all programmed to attack only humans or beings of totally human outline (i.e., two arms, two legs, a head, and no other extremities). Since Tharkoldu have wings, winged beings such as ravagons and Larendi are safe from vrilquitos, as are tail-owning races like the edeinos and totally nonhumanoid races like the stalengers, ustanah, Lorbaat (though not the Gudasko and Draygaak), etc. Dwarves, elves, and giants are all susceptible to attack, as are werewolves in man-wolf form.

Reality Dust

This is an offshoot of Mobius' reality bomb program. A missile warhead is filled with dust and the same amount of eternium that a reality bomb would have. As long as the warhead detonates at least 500' above the ground, the effect will be similar to that of a reality bomb; any less, and the Earth's magnetic field somehow nullifies the effects. The dust is spread around in the atmosphere, increasing area of effect at the cost of duration, with the atmosphere being affected within a ten-mile radius of the bomb blast in all directions (except possibly straight down), but only for an hour's time. As with reality bombs, the area affected is a Nile pure zone. It is, of course, possible for helicopters and planes to fly under the dust's effective ceiling, but such seat-of-the-pants flying requires an air vehicles roll of 12 for pilots of conventional aircraft. Helicopters are excluded, as they commonly go this low.

The missile Mobius uses has a range of 20 miles (it's the same model he uses for his version of the stelae rocket), and he uses it mainly to provide last-ditch air defense against the sophisticated jets of Core Earth. He has also been known to use it offensively, to "prepare" a safe air corridor for his own ord aircrews to operate in Core Earth, nullifying the defenders' fighters and SAM defenses. Combat successes occurred in Saudi Arabia, Libya, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Texas. Jean Malraux (who lost many fighters to this weapon in Yugoslavia), 3327, and Jezrael are all developing their own versions of this missile, with payloads of miniature talismans replacing the eternium, for use against each other and the organic starships of the Akashans.

Time Talisman

These are talismans with a delayed-action activation. Their reality does not take effect immediately, but only at some specific future time. Thus, a talisman of Ayslish, Living Land, or Orrorshan reality could be smuggled on board an airplane, to go off at the most inconvenient time (i.e., in midair). As special weapons of the High Lords, they create a pure zone of their reality in what is generally a 100' radius, generally for an hour. Toughness depends on the nature of the item used, but it ranges from 13 for the softest items to 24 for the hardest. How far in the future they go off is entirely controlled by the High Lord. ❑

The Living City

Misti's Moonlight Pawnshop

by Terence Kemper

Welcome, so to speak, to Longshoreman's Lane, in the worst neighborhood in the Port section of Raven's Bluff. This decrepit, but still inhabited building in front of us is Misti Morgan's Moonlight Pawnshop. Note the three dusty golden balls up there, the traditional sign of a pawnshop. And see the faded full moon with the silhouette of a black cat on it, the symbol of the Moonlight Pawnshop.

The shop is a drab, grayish, two-storied building with windows closed with grey-green shutters. The once-ornate balustrade on the raised front porch is cracked and the white paint peeled. The heavy oaken front door with its brass lion's-head door knocker is cracked, faded, and green with verdigris. A single barrel, apparently a seat on the otherwise barren front porch, is the only sign that the building might be occupied. The porch itself is pot-bellied, and leaves float in a small puddle to one side. Around one of the tilted porch pillars twists a sinuous vine. Largely deserted by day, the pawnshop is sometimes a wasps' nest of evil activity by night. The Moonlight Pawnshop is a well-known front for a fencing operation run by Misti Morgan, with deep and secret connections to the underworld throughout the City.

The Building

The Pawnshop building is long and narrow, some 35 feet wide and 100 feet long. It includes two full floors, with both a cellar and an attic. There is a small courtyard at the rear behind high brick walls, approximately 35 x 40. On either side of the building are weedy, trash-strewn alleyways that run the width of the block. Misti Morgan and Vanet, the tiny elf girl, live upstairs, and the kitchen is downstairs in this "shot-bun" style apartment.

The pawnshop business occupies about two-thirds of the building. As one enters front door, being careful to avoid stepping in the stagnant puddle, one sees the front room of the business, about 50 deep to the counter. Except for narrow aisles, there is virtually no open space. The walls and floors are covered with every imaginable kind of tool and equipment, from cauldrons to tin cans of catnip. Everything is here but the proverbial kitchen sink, but there *are* wash-tubs. Against the right wall, one finds barrels and boxes of kitchen gear: wash basins, pots, pans, cauldrons, spits, rotisseries, serving knives, forks and spoons, washboards and cheese graters.

The next aisle to the left is for "craft tools" including stonemason's, carpenter's and locksmith's tools as well as some of the more common farming tools such as shovels and billhooks. There are blacksmith's tools somewhere in this row too. The next row to the left contains riding gear and wheel and wagon-wright tools, spoke shaves, saddle blankets, spurs, and so forth. The last row against the far left wall contains large barrels and boxes of common (unornamented) weapons and unmatched pieces of common armor. The corner next to the counter is where the musical instruments are kept.

Overhead hang various wares suspended from three or four ladders depending from the high ceiling. This arrangement is not merely for display: the ladders are heavily weighted and tied so that they are effectively booby-trapped, ready to swing down or fall on unsuspecting enemies. Some of the long, heavy knives seemingly dangling from the ladders are razor-sharp—and firmly fixed. In another part of the room, shovels, hoes, and billhooks are similarly booby-trapped. Elsewhere there are boxes of stones rigged to cascade down.

Across the center of the room, running from wall to wall, is a counter with shelves under it. In the center of the counter is a "drawbridge" so that persons behind the counter can go through to the front of the counter. Behind the counter are various small but not expensive items: brass pitchers, decanters, cheap wooden statuettes, portable music stands, and a handful of weapons that Misti keeps nearby to protect herself, a hand crossbow, always kept loaded, throwing knives secreted in several places, and a short sword kept out of sight but within easy reach.

Behind the counter are two giant upright shelves filled with an assortment of common, inexpensive books. Some of the shelves are cluttered with bric-a-brac such as vases and bookends. The two large shelves are divided by a passage between them that matches the "drawbridge" in the counter, so that Misti and company may pass directly into the kitchen beyond.

The kitchen, the only "personal space" on the ground floor, is spacious and tiled with large square brick-red floor tiles. To the left, between the two bookshelves, is a fireplace equipped with fire dogs (andirons), screen, shovel, poker and a broom. On a stone shelf next to it rest pots, pans, and pot hangers laid on it. On the other side of the kitchen is a large, collapsible trestle table some eight feet long and three and a half wide. There are also six permanent wooden chairs of no particular style, and two collapsible chairs stand in the corner. There is no sink, but a shelf on one wall holds a lavabo and pitcher. Most washing is done in the fountain in the back courtyard.

The courtyard is largely bare except for a small vegetable patch, the fountain, and a couple of large shade trees. In one corner is a large cage with several medium-sized song birds inside.

The second floor consists of a storeroom for the shop below and the bedroom/parlor, right off the spiral staircase. The bedroom usually contains two or three big trunks, a chest of drawers and a big four-poster bed. At the foot of this bed is a smaller, child-sized bed where the diminutive elf-girl, Vanet, sleeps. Some oil lamps perch on the walls, and one sits on a table in the corner. A second fireplace in the room appears on the far wall, directly above the kitchen fireplace and uses the same chimney. One side

window opposite the staircase looks onto a very large oak tree, one limb of which passes just below the window, furnishing the nimble Vanet with an unseen way of leaving the house. A door to your left as you leave the spiral staircase leads to the storeroom, which is the place in which semi-valuable things such as rugs, tapestries, bolts of fine cloth, chests of clothing, two armoires and padded chests full of carved ivory and fine woods are stored. At least one of the chests is booby-trapped, and the armoires have secret panels containing gold, jewels, etc. The storeroom has only one window, a small, high one on the north wall; it also has a narrow door leading to a small room that juts out over the street below, like many ancient houses. The front of this room stops only six feet from the house across the street. Thieves have been known to jump from one house to another here.

In one corner is a ladder fastened to the wall at an angle for easier climbing to the attic above. The attic is used for dead storage. There are extra beds and chairs here, as well as chests of heavy blankets and winter clothing. Misti may sometimes keep valuables up here. Dormer windows jut up out of the steeply sloping roof, making the attic a good lookout post.

Back down the spiral staircase, below the first floor is the cellar in which fine wine and other valuables are stored. The cellar is made of rough-hewn stones, similar to those of the chimney and fireplaces. At first glance the cellar seems to be solely for the storage of kegs of beer and bottles of wine, but there are chests of rare and valuable spices as well, and probably some magical ingredients if someone were to look hard enough.

Rapping on certain of the kegs does not produce the resonant sound of a vessel full of beer or wine. Some of these barrels contain gold, silver, and electrum coins—or jewelry. Some are also booby-trapped, and only Misti and Vanet knows which are which. Under cloths in the far corner are some fine pieces of furniture stored here temporarily. At times there are also candlesticks and chalices stolen from churches stashed here.

Two secret passages lead from the cellar to other "safe houses" for thieves, but they are well hidden in the dark and cobwebbed cellar. One of the "safe houses" is a block away, and the other is two and a half blocks distant. Both secret passages and the cellar itself are booby-trapped. Trespassers beware!

The Business

At its most basic, the Moonlight Pawnshop operates as a money-lending business, acting as a bank, both as a depository for funds or other valuables, or as a lending institution for those too impoverished or desperate enough to obtain credit from conventional lenders.

The lending side of the business is rather simple. Misti knows many of the Port Quarters permanent residents personally and the rest by reputation. Based on what she knows about the person's ability to repay the loan and/or the asset put up for security, she assesses the risk and charges a weekly interest rate ranging from 5% to 25%, for those with no collateral or assets to pledge. In case of assets, she appraises the item, ranging from jewels to kegs of wine, calling in friends expert in the appropriate area if she doesn't know the item's value. She then lends up to 75% of the item's appraised value.

The appraised value is normally the standard market value of the item. In the case of goods known to be stolen, Misti uses the black market value, which ranges from the actual market value if the item is ordinary (i.e. "typical" candlesticks, run of the mill precious and semi-precious stones, etc.), or discounted if the item is known to be "hot" and that the owners or authorities are presently searching for the item, or if it is upon some merchant's or official list of items to recover. If Misti is caught holding one of these items during a periodic official search, or if informers report that she has received such an item, of course she will be forced to surrender the goods and be forced to pay a heavy fine. Generally, authorities do not jail pawnbrokers because of their obvious usefulness as lenders to the poor and desperate, and as a way to keep track of the flow of stolen goods. Naturally, Misti is taxed upon the profits of her business, and she keeps a second set of books for the tax collectors. She also disposes of "hot" properties quickly and surreptitiously.

Borrowers who wish to recover their pawned goods are responsible for the original principle lent and all interest charges upon the item. Failure to pay the interest weekly (or in advance for an agreed upon term), forfeits the item after a period of default (generally 30 days). The standard red tag that was originally placed upon the pawned item is then removed, and the item is marked for sale to any customer.

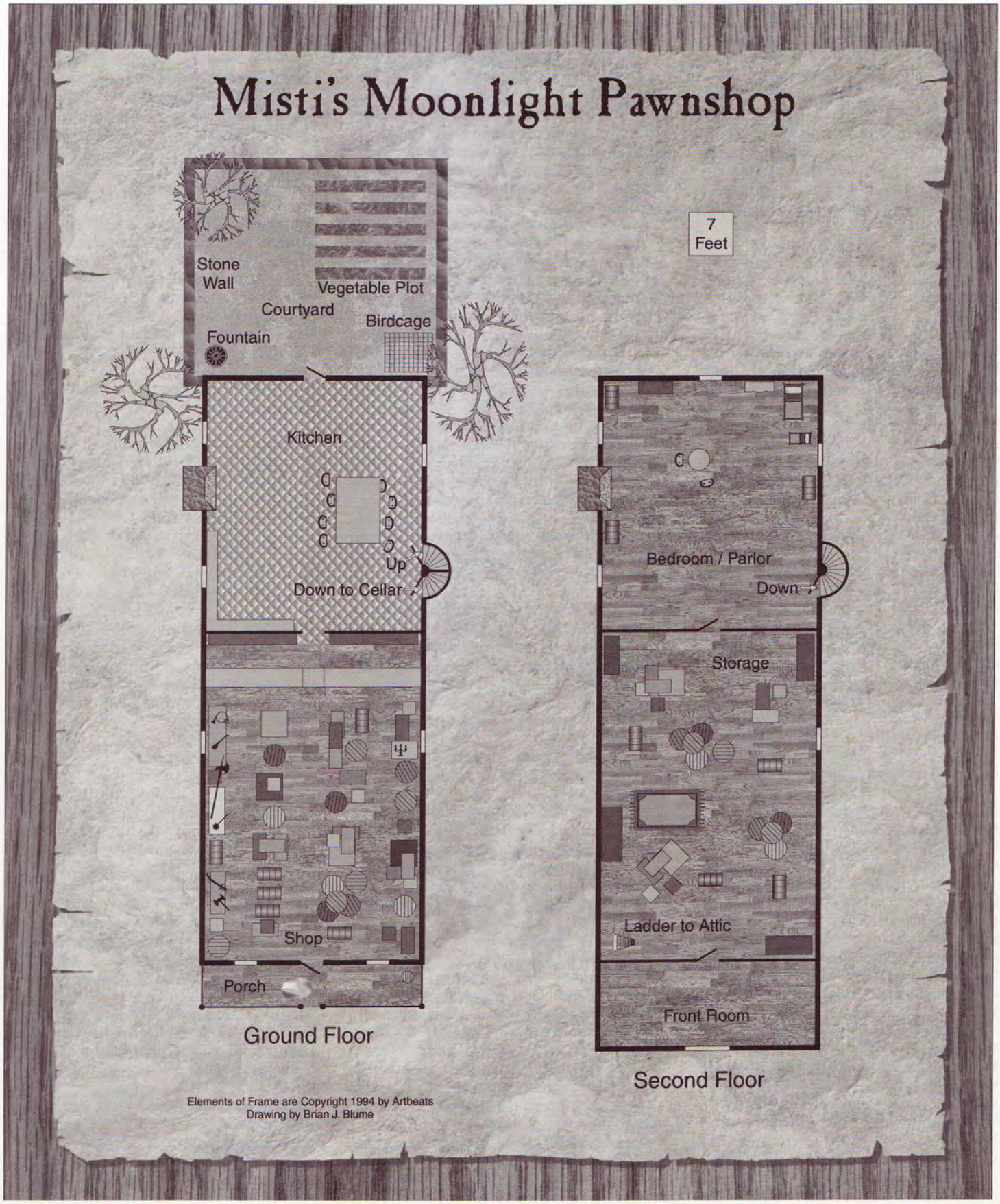
In general, Misti buys or sells anything in good condition. She does not run a "second-hand" shop. In a pinch, she can serve as an outfitter for almost any kind of adventure, although large quantities of certain items may be in short supply or even not available.

There are some kinds of things that Misti does not deal with. She would be extremely reluctant to pawn animals, in as much as she has nowhere to keep the larger ones—and would not want to bother with feeding and cleaning up after them. She might be willing to pawn valuable (non-farm) plants, but not plant products such as fruits or vegetables—but maybe sacks of grain, cotton or flax, or valuable seeds. She wouldn't be happy about it, though, unless it had some magical properties.

Misti also does not perform the functions of large commercial banks. She does not lend over 5,000 gold pieces except in cases of very valuable collateral, and she would never lend money to build anything (houses, shops, barns, etc.). Nor does she deal with any type of commercial papers, such as bills of credit, bonds, checks, stock or partnership papers, or the secondary market for mortgages or personal loans. At the DM's discretion, if it is necessary for Misti to deal with these kinds of things for the sake of an unusual story-line, then the maximum rate of interest should be charged.

In all cases, Misti is an evil person. Like most characters, she has both pleasant and unpleasant traits. But while she is not a serial villain with grand plans to perpetrate the crime of the century each week—only to be foiled by the heroes—her genuine affection for her friends should not mislead the DM into thinking she is anything less than a self-serving and dangerous criminal. Other members of her band are more or less wicked than Misti, but all are loyal to each other before less familiar acquaintances.

Note: Misti is expert at forgery and the detection of forgeries. Anyone defaulting upon a particularly large loan can be expected to be visited by friends of Misti—friends known as *persuaders* or *enforcers,* and they are *particularly* unpleasant people.


Misti's Moonlight Pawnshop
Stone Wall
Vegetable Plot
Courtyard
Birdcage
Fountain
Kitchen
Up
Down to Cellar
Shop
Porch
Ground Floor
7 Feet
Bedroom / Parlor
Down
Storage
Ladder to Attic
Front Room
Second Floor
Elements of Frame are Copyright 1994 by Artbeats
Drawing by Brian J. Blume

The Characters

Misti Morgan
8th Level Human Thief (Fence)
Lawful Evil

Strength:	9
Intelligence:	13
Wisdom:	16
Dexterity:	16
Constitution:	11
Charisma:	12
Comeliness:	15

AC:	5, studded & Dex
Hit Points:	40
THAC0:	18

Weapon Proficiencies: Hand crossbow, throwing knives, blackjack, short sword, dagger

Non-weapon Proficiencies: Appraisal, bargaining, bookkeeping, Common (native tongue), Elvish (13), forgery (and its detection), history of the local underworld, lending (character and risk appraisal, interest rates, etc.), read/write, small boat sailing

Thief's Skills: PP 50%, OL 55%, F/RT 55%, MS 55%, HS 45%, DN 55%, CW 90%, RL 50%, Jump 20%

Jump is the ability to high-jump 5' successfully and to broad-jump 8' successfully.

Equipment in Thief's Kit: Keymaking kit, lockpicks, gloves of evasion, lens of valuation, oil of slickness, darksuit, footpads boots, wax,

Magical Items: *Boxes of delightful transport, daggers of impaling* (2), *box of discovery* (see new magical item at end of article)

Misti Morgan is the daughter of a pirate captain and a swarthy native island girl. She and her mother were abandoned by her footloose and fancy-free father, and Misti has difficulty forming long-term commitments to adult men.

Misti is 5'4", 120 svelte pounds, with curly, dark brown hair worn down to the middle of her back. Her eyes are piercing, almost black. Her skin is swarthy and she tans well without burning. She tends to wear her hair in long, curly locks, and she is quite striking upon first sight, since she wears bright primary colors and plenty of jewelry—especially earrings, bangles, bracelets and gold necklaces.

Nearly 30, Misti is still strongly attractive to men, and they to her. She can easily go from a coquettish mood to a cat-like viciousness in the twinkling of an eye, sometimes losing the initial trust that her charm and beauty have induced in men. If betrayed, her vengeance is something to be feared. Generally barefooted at home, in cool or rainy weather, she dons a wool-lined cap and water-proof leather cape. Her favorite colors are red and yellow. Misti's coquettishness approaches wantonness at times, but it is all a game of manipulation for her.

In her teens, Misti was a cat-burglar and a pick-pocket, but turned to a life of fencing when she realized that she could earn more money at less risk that way. She was caught inside a house with a bag full of silverware and jewelry and was lucky enough to serve only six months as a first offender. She used her prison time to find a more profitable criminal line of work. She has used her street smarts to get to know virtually every underworld person in Ravens Bluff, from the pick-pockets and street thieves to the Lord Thief Taker, Anton Paere. She has used her wits to stay out of his clutches and remain as neutral as possible in the thieves' "turf wars." For some time, she was the mistress of Lyndon Golight of the Safe Harbor Marine Insurance Company, where she learned a great deal about legal and forged documents from that "criminal" lawyer about legal and forged documents.

Currently, Misti is without a "main man," and she continues to live with her best friend and companion, Vanet, the diminutive elf-girl. She also has a "thieves' band" of informants and lookouts who keep an eye out for trouble in return for good prices for stolen goods—and a safe hideaway should they need it. Some of those making up this band are Jack the Cripple, Derrick the Dexterous, Pete the Pick-pocket and Gwayne the Gamester.

Other items of note about Misti are that she owns a black cat named "midnight," an ordinary, but large house cat, weighing about ten pounds. Misti keeps her personal valuables in a hollow stone near the fireplace. Misti owns a small boat, a ketch with a mainmast forward with jibs and a mizzenmast aft, about 20 feet long. She and Vanet, or occasionally someone else, make night smuggling runs to nearby small ports up the coast.

Vanet Twiningvine
4th Level Elf Thief
Neutral

Strength:	9
Intelligence:	12
Wisdom:	11
Dexterity:	16
Constitution:	8
Charisma:	13
Comeliness:	12

AC:	7
Hit Points:	19
THAC0:	10

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, blowgun, garrote, blackjack, staff

Non-weapon proficiencies: Common (12), Elvish (native tongue), herbalism (12), information gathering (15), looting (16), observation (14), jumping (11), set snares (13)

Thief's Skills: PP 30%, OL 25%, F/RT 20%, MS 40%, HS 35%, DN 35%, CW 30, RL 0

Thief's Kit: Darksuit, footpads, grapples, skeleton key, limewood strips, aniseed, catstink, handlamp, boots with pockets, pin ring, hacksaw blade, potion of perception, gloves of evasion, woodlands suit

Magical Item: *Kristalight*

Vanet is tiny, of almost childlike proportions (3'4" tall and 75 pounds). She has strawberry blonde hair and violet eyes. The diminutive elf has a cat-like ability to fade into the background by remaining motionless. Normally, she wears a forest-green blouse and brown leotard pants, switching to charcoal after dark. She is 19 years old and an orphan taken in by Misti, who raised her to be a thief and spy/messenger for Misti herself. Vanet's status within the household is ambiguous, somewhere between a daughter and best friend. She would not easily betray Misti, and Misti trusts her almost absolutely. Misti's business is Vanet's business as well, and Vanet knows all sorts of secrets about Misti and her pawnshop.

Vanet serves as a spy, lookout, and messenger for Misti and tends the

shop when Misti has to be gone. Her personality is quiet to the point of reticence. She is very observant, her violet eyes missing little of importance—and her sharp elvish ears missing less.

Vanet owns a pet monkey named Caper. Caper is creature resembling the rhesus or capuchin monkeys, about 17 inches long not counting his 18-inch tail, and weighing about five pounds. Caper is adept at climbing and intelligent enough to follow simple commands and steal small objects. He will also open doors or windows for Vanet or Misti, as long as it does not require too much strength, for—although very dexterous—he cannot lift more than about two pounds.

Caper
Pet Monkey
Neutral

AC:	7
MV:	12 (9 climbing)
Hit Dice:	1/2, 3 hit points
THAC0:	20
MV:	12 (9 climbing)

Jack the Cripple
6th Level Human Thief/Beggar
Lawful Neutral

Strength:	13
Intelligence:	11
Wisdom:	14
Constitution:	13
Charisma:	12
Comeliness:	7
AC:	7
Hit Points:	28
THAC0:	18

Weapon Proficiencies: Crutch, dagger, spiked boots, blackjack, garrote, bludgeon

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Acting (14), begging (16), Common, disguises (13), Gnomish (11), intelligence-gathering (13), observation (14), oral memory (17, aural equivalent of a "photographic" memory)
Thief's Skills: PP 45%, OL 40%, F/RT 35%, MS 40%, HS 45%, DN 45%, CW 60%, RL 20%

Items in Thief's Kit: Listening cone, crowbar, glasscutter, limewood, sharkskin, wax block, dog pepper, marbles, blinding powder, thieves picks, metal file, chisels, footpads' boots, darksuit, arm sling, vials of Poison.

"Jack the Cripple" is a professional "fake cripple" beggar (a type well known in medieval times). He pretends to be a hunchback with a fake bandaged leg or sometimes an arm in a sling. He is 5'9" but keeps himself perpetually hunched over, making him look smaller and more pathetic. He weighs 145 pounds and—even at 45 years old—is strong enough to be dangerous. He has greasy brown hair salted with grey, worn long and straggly to his shoulders, and grey eyes. His face is always stubbled with several days' of beard growth, and he has a few scars on his face and forearms from the times he has been beaten.

He will pickpocket and snatch fallen or carelessly placed items without hesitation. He takes off the thick leather pad that makes his "hunchback" and his bandages each night. He lives in the neighborhood of Misti's pawnshop, generally found in the cellar of an abandoned house a few doors away. He acts as a spy and messenger for Misti and knows nearly everyone in the criminal and beggar underworld. His auditory memory is phenomenal, and he rarely forgets anything he has been told or has overheard.

Since he is unkempt and disheveled, Jack is not a physically attractive person, but he is an expert beggar and uses his charm and fast-talking to appeal for alms. He carries a cup or bowl for rattling at passers-by and to catch a tossed coin. He only keeps a few items of his thief's kit upon his person; the rest he keeps in his cellar or behind loose stones of buildings in the neighborhood.

Although Jack seems pitifully poor, he is actually somewhat of a miser and—according to the "underworld grapevine"—he actually may have a couple thousand gold squirreled away somewhere. Occasionally he disappears for a week or two and returns seeming the same as ever, but with a strange little smile playing about his lips. No one has ever been able to trail him, for this master of disguises and deceptions is as difficult to follow as anyone can be. He is outwardly polite to all strangers, but reveals his true self to his friends and underworld associates. He can be quite a curmudgeon, except that he is always kind to little Pete, for some unknown reason.

Derek the Dexterous
2nd Level Human Thief (Burglar)
Lawful Neutral

Strength:	12
Intelligence:	13
Wisdom:	13
Dexterity:	14
Constitution:	10
Charisma:	13
Comeliness:	10
AC:	9
Hit Point:	11
THAC0:	20

Weapon Proficiencies: dirk, blackjack, garrote

Non-weapon Proficiencies: Alertness (13), Common, intelligence-gathering (12), looting (12), observation (12), tailoring (11)

Thief's Skills: PP 35%, OL 40%, F/RT 10%, MS40%, HS 30%, D 40%, CW 70, RL 0%

Items in Thief's Kit: Footpad's boots, leather straps, limewood, darksuit (He can borrow other items from from Misti or Jack the Cripple)

Derek is the boy leader of the street urchins who form a small thieves' band controlled by Misti. The largest and strongest of the boys, Derek would rather rule by street-smarts than fisticuffs, but he has been challenged before and has always won. He is 14 years old, 5'4", 110 pounds, blonde with blue eyes, slender at the waist, and broad-shouldered.

Derek's specialty is burglary of houses while their occupants are elsewhere, although once in awhile he sneaks into a house at night. He also "light-fingers" articles from unwary shopkeepers, usually in neighborhoods of the city where he is not well known or in the area where the caravans stop overnight outside the main city walls. He is somber and serious most of the time and a surprisingly good thinker for his age. He is indebted to Misti for hiding him on occasion. He, like the other boys in the street gang, is illiterate, but he would like to learn to read and write if he had the opportunity.

Pete/Petra the Pickpocket
1st Level Elf Thief
Lawful Neutral

Strength:	10
Intelligence:	12
Wisdom:	13
Dexterity:	13
Constitution:	9
Charisma:	13
Comeliness:	14
AC:	9
Hit Points:	4
THAC0:	20

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, sling-shot, short bow (novice)

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Alertness (12), Common (12), disguise (11), Elvish (native language), fast-talking (12), observation (12), voice mimicry (12); currently learning to read lips (7)

Thief's Skills: PP 65%, F/RT 20%, MD 5%, HS 15%, DN 25%, CW 65%, RL 0%

Thief's Kit: Oil of slickness, glass-cutter, metal file, razor-ring, elvish boots of silence, woodland suit, dog pepper (3 packets), thief's paintpot (makeup)

Pete the Pickpocket is a slender, handsome fellow, aged 13, standing 4'9", and weighing 85 pounds. (**Note to DM:** As an option, Pete can begin as a girl, Petra, rather than as a boy). He is androgynous and can easily pass for a girl whenever he wishes. He deliberately wears his hair in a page-boy to enhance his "girlishness." He has light brown hair and blue eyes and is easily identified as an elf. Boy or girl, this is one tough kid, perfectly capable of defending him- or herself, and a particularly fast runner and darter/hider. Pete keeps a variety of clothing of both genders as well as makeup and jewelry.

Pete was a shepherd from a small village about six miles from Raven's Bluff. He fled when a pack of wolves took two lambs and a sheep. Pete decided that the long, lonely, and dull hours of sheep tending—not to mention the terror of the wolves—was not the life he wanted to lead. After wandering aimlessly about Raven's Bluff, filching bread, fruit, and small coins, Pete was discovered by Derek. "Consider yourself one of us," Derek said.

Gwayne the Gamester
2nd Level Human Thief (Swindler)
Lawful Evil

Strength:	10
Intelligence:	14
Wisdom:	12
Dexterity:	15
Constitution:	9
Charisma:	14
Comeliness:	10
AC:	9
Hit Points:	13
THAC0:	20

Weapon Proficiencies: Club, dagger, padded gloves

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Alertness (13), Common (native tongue), fast-talking (13), looting (11), rope use (12), tumbling (11), Gambling (15)

Thief's Skills: PP 30%, OL 30%, F/RT 25%, MS 25%, HS 20%, DN 30%, CW 70%, RL 0%

Thief's Kit: Marked cards, loaded dice, shells and clay pea for shell game, bag of marbles,sharkskin, thief's pick, wax block, water shoes

Gwayne is 5'0" and weighs 80 pounds. He is red-haired, green-eyed, and freckled across the bridge of his nose and upper cheeks. He looks sweet, innocent and somewhat naive, a pose he cultivates in order to cheat others.

Gwayne is involved in a number of swindling and gambling games, notably card games, card tricks, the shell game, gambling with dice, and short change swindles. He loots any empty house he can get into and shoplifts on occasion. He also sells "gold" items in the marketplace—items that are actually only gold-plated or even brass—specializing in rings, bracelets, and earrings.

Gwayne is quick-witted and fast on his feet, thus he is difficult to catch in the crowded market where he works. He wears "average" clothing and keeps his straight red hair cut short and brushed so he does not look like a street urchin. His hair generally is cut to just below his ears. He is careful not to draw too much attention to himself, preferring to work in quiet corners not far from the marketplace.

Gwayne's father died about five years ago, leaving his mother destitute. He was apprenticed out to a brickmaker, tamping red brick clay into forms and carrying the unbaked bricks to the kiln. It was hard labor with long hours for barely more than room and board. Since he was always covered with red clay and his hair was red and his face freckled, he was called "Brick," a name he came to loathe. He ran away from the brickyard about a year ago (he is twelve now) and stumbled onto the street gang. He allows the other boys to use the loathsome "Brick" as his code-name, and Misti occasionally gets away with calling him "Brickie."

Magical Items

Box of Discovery
This is a black lacquer box about 8" x 8" and 12" high. Upon the top is the bas-relief wood carving of a bearded dwarf's face. When the magic words, "Ishti maronja" are spoken (known only to Misti and the person from whom she obtained the box), followed by the name or description of a lost or stolen item, the face comes alive and speaks. The eyes open and the face shows natural expressions.

If questioned, the face tells the location of the item. It gives directions (street names, landmarks, descriptions of buildings and rooms, etc). It is up to the DM's discretion as to how detailed the description will be (whether to force the characters to search an entire room or house, or merely a chest or armoire).

Kristalight
This is a long, hexagonal piece of natural crystal, about a foot long and two inches in diameter. It is substantially clear, but there are imperfections or infusions in the crystal.

At the words "Orthala, Orthala, magic crystal, give light," the crystal casts a light much like a strong flashlight beam, covering an area some six feet in diameter at a distance of 12 feet from the front surface of the crystal. At the words "Orthala, Orthala, make the light cease," the light goes out. The *kristalight* can be shattered by a hard blow or a fall of three feet or more. It cannot be restored except by a powerful (8th level) *mend* spell.

Cursed Items

There are surely cursed items as well as unidentified magic items passing through Misti's pawnshop. From time

to time, Misti has a wizard check unusual items for any aura of magic. Since this is expensive, Misti does it only occasionally, usually when an unusual item comes into the shop. Between two and four times a year, she has a wizard perform a general sweep of everything in the shop, since she hopes the value of a newly discovered magic item will more than make up for the cost of the wizard (this is not always true, unfortunately), and cursed items cost money to detect and are worse than worthless, being downright dangerous.

The Startled Stag
This is a large bronze statue of a rampant or rearing stag with a terrified look on his face. It stands about two and a half feet tall, including antlers, and it weighs about 15 pounds. The stag is hollow and contains a bottle or vessel with its stopper between the stag's shoulder blades. If anyone unstops the stag, a colorless, odorless but foul-tasting gas (rotten egg taste) vents. Within 1d4 turns, it causes all nearby living creatures to freeze in place for a period of 1d20 days.

The Adventures

"I Will Gladly Pay You Thursday ..."
The PC adventurers blow into town needing a large sum of money, and since they are relatively unknown and/or have only limited collateral, they are forced to seek out Misti Morgan's Moonlight Pawnshop for a loan. Misti is not interested in lending them money without some fairly onerous conditions, among which may be included some smuggling runs for her or the recovery of a magical item. Central to the adventure will be the haggling and negotiations between Misti and the PCs , as well as the "onerous" conditions imposed upon them. It is recommended that the DM drive a hard bargain and eventually agree to lend the money.

Caveat Emptor
The PCs are in search of adventure and find one. While preparing for their quest, they discover that they will need a number of basic items—which just happen to be available at Misti's shop. Central to this portion of this adventure is the haggling and negotiation over the purchase prices of items and Misti's roving search for items that the PCs need, or which she thinks will interest them. Of course, Misti may decide to "sic" her band of thieves and beggars on the characters and steal back items or just rob them blind, with a possible ensuing struggle and/or pursuit. The thieves lead the PCs on a not-so-merry chase through the worst section of town.

What a Bargain!
Quite by accident, the PCs buy an item that has magical properties, which Misti does not discover until they have been gone for a couple of days. Misti can have a wizard perform a routine *detect magic* sweep of the shop after the PCs have left and discover a residual magical aura which indicates that the item that was in that spot and left the cloudy magical aura of its shape behind was a powerful, though ordinary-appearing magical item. Misti will immediately realize that she has sold the item for far less than it was worth and dispatch all or some of her thieves' band (possibly including characters not contained herein) to steal the magical item back. The unsuspecting PCs may discover the item is magical (if they have a spellcaster in their party) or figure out there is something peculiar about the item as an attempt or two is made to steal it.

True Love
The PCs wander into town and eventually end up in the Port district of Ravens Bluff. Needing general supplies, they are directed to Misti's Moonlight Pawnshop. They spend quite a while there, looking at the myriad of items and haggling with Misti for the things they need. Misti sizes them up and hires two or three to steal a valuable vase from a mansion (or, alternately) to "liquidate" a rival fence, Nell McGroddy.

In the subsequent occasional contacts with Misti, she manages to fall in love with one of the male PCs and uses all of her feminine wiles and sensuous flirting to make him stay and forget about his companions and any thought of further adventure. Misti will, of course, want him to become a thief or help her with the shop, whether he wants to or not. If spurned by the PC, Misti becomes the proverbial "fury called a woman scorned" and pursues him with all her considerable resources. She may send the thieves to punish him or persuade him to return. The story from this point on should have a comic bent, with botched attempts, flawed disguises, unsafe chases with the law pursuing the thieves who are chasing the PCs.

Little Boy Lost
Pete's cruel father, Paul Pollard, has finally arrived in the City to take Pete back to the dreaded shepherd's job in the distant hills. Paul hires the PCs to snatch Pete from his life of crime.

Misti and the thief's band do everything in their power to hide and save Pete/Petra, even making him a servant of the opposite gender in a rich man's mansion.

Do the PCs catch Pete and return him to his cruel father? Or do they go soft-hearted and secretly collaborate with the thieves and Pete? There will, of course, be a merry chase through the crowded marketplace, upsetting vegetable stalls, apple carts and through kiosks with carpets and baskets, the PCs in hot pursuit with the thieves helping Pete and the angry merchants and constables chasing everyone. A night chase through the deepest, darkest, most dangerous neighborhoods in the Raven's Bluff Port district could also be arranged.

To Catch A Thief
If the PCs are predominantly lawful, the city watch may employ them as special agents to investigate and ultimately apprehend one or more of Misti's band of thieves. In this scenario, all of the thieves can prove to be wiley opponents, but the PCs run the risk of developing sympathy for the younger or less hardened of the criminals. Despite the evil alignments of some of the band, their genuine friendship for and loyalty to one another could lead the PCs to believe they are more noble than they truly are.

❑

Gothic Heroes

Famous Opponents of the Red Death

by William W. Connors

Welcome to the first of several features to detail characters from the "Masque of the Red Death" campaign setting.

This month we'll take a look at the protagonists of Bram Stoker's immortal Dracula. *With the information provided, Dungeon Masters will be able to introduce these characters as NPCs or make them available to their players.*

Next month, we'll examine the many personalities that visitors to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago were likely to encounter. Among these are the noted scientist Nichola Tesla and Gothic Earth's most controversial dancer, Little Egypt.

In the year 1890, a group of heroic adventurers went through an ordeal the likes of which few can claim to have survived. To be sure, they were but mortal men and women. And yet these creatures of flesh and blood and bone dared to confront Dracula, the Prince of Darkness himself.

Although they were led by one of the finest minds on Gothic Earth, these heroes were not of themselves extraordinary people. Jonathan Harker was no more than a common businessman, and his wife aspired to be only his assistant. Their companions—a psychiatrist, a nobleman, and an American frontiersman—were men of good character, certainly. But, like most great heroes, they never planned to be anything more than what they were.

On the 6th of November, their great hunt ended where it began, deep in the Carpathians. When all was said and done, they were left to mourn the passing of a dear friend. They found comfort in the fact that a great evil had been destroyed, but recognized that their terrible work had only just begun.

Now, a century later, we pay homage to this group of heroes.

Jonathan & Wilhelmina Harker

Alignment: Lawful Good
Class: Tradesman
XP Level: 6 & 3

	John	Mina
Strength:	12	10
Dexterity:	12	14
Constitution:	14	10
Intelligence:	10	14
Wisdom:	10	16
Charisma:	14	16
Armor Class:	10	10
Hit Points:	21	16
THAC0:	18	20
No. of Attacks:	1	1

Weapon Proficiencies
Jonathan: Derringer, navy pistol, repeating rifle, knife
Mina: Derringer, repeating carbine

Nonweapon Proficiencies
Jonathan: Appraising (10), equestrian (14), etiquette (14), lang: English (native), lang: Latin (10), lang: German (10), photography (12), SI: business Law (10)
Mina: Academician (14), lang: English (native), lang: French (14), lang: music (14), lang: shorthand (14), musician: piano (14), SI: railroads (14), sixth sense (11)

Background
Jonathan Harker was born near Exeter. His father was a man of business and Jonathan grew up living the life of the upper-middle class. Late in 1889, he proposed to his childhood sweetheart, Wilhelmina Murray, an assistant school mistress, and the two were engaged.

In May of 1890, Jonathan was dispatched by Peter Hawkins, his employer, to finalize the sale of Carfax Abbey, an estate near Purfleet, to a Transylvanian nobleman named Dracula. Little did he suspect that this task would change his life forever.

Harker found that his host was an inhuman monster who planned to travel to England to satisfy his lust for human blood. He escaped from the vampire, but not before the beast completed its journey. Driven nearly insane by his ordeal, he found himself rescued by a band of Vistani. The gypsies delivered him to the hands of Sister Agatha, head

nurse at the Hospital of St. Joseph and Ste. Mary in Buda-Pesth.

Upon his recovery and return to England, Jonathan and Mina were promptly married. Before long, however, the Harkers encountered Dracula again and the two joined with a number of friends to battle the vampire.

During a skirmish with the Count, Mina was bitten by him and placed in danger of becoming undead herself. Thanks to the knowledge of the metaphysician Abraham Van Helsing and the knife of Mr. Quincy Morris, however, Dracula was defeated and Mina's health restored.

Role-Playing
Harker is a determined man who has taken Van Helsing's battle against evil to heart. He sees himself not as a hero, but as a man doing what must be done.

Having survived the cold embrace of death itself, Mina understands better than anyone the nature of her and Jonathan's enemies. She fears nothing but failure in her crusade against the darkness.

Forbidden Lore
Following their encounter with Dracula, the Harkers joined Die Wachtern. Mina has proven herself to be a valuable asset with her work in the archives and Jonathan has become a devoted soldier in the war against evil.

Dr. Abraham Van Helsing

Alignment: Lawful Good
Class: Adept
Kit: Metaphysician
XP Level: 12

Strength: 8
Dexterity: 9
Constitution: 8
Intelligence: 18
Wisdom: 17
Charisma: 16

Armor Class: 10
Hit Points: 25
THAC0: 17
No. of Attacks: 1

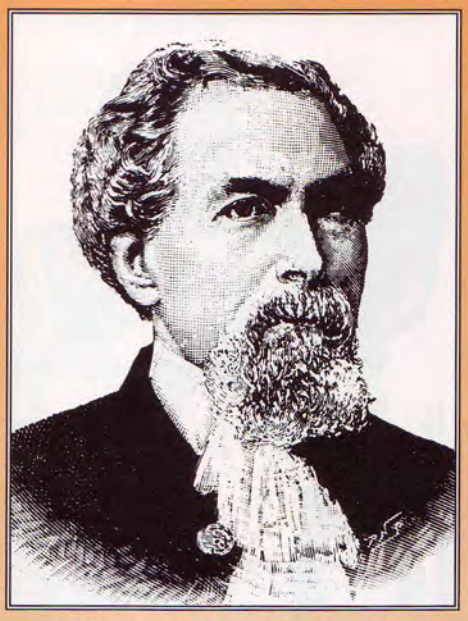
Weapon Proficiencies: Sword cane, derringer, navy pistol, knife

Proficiencies: Academician (17), forbidden lore (17), lang: Dutch (native), lang: English (18), lang: Frisian (native), lang: Latin (18), medicine (17), mesmerism (16), psychology (17), mod. religion: Catholicism (17), SI: classical literature (18), spellcraft (18), spiritcraft (18), philosophy (17).

Spells Memorized: L1—*Alarm, detect magic, detect undead, identify, protection from evil;* L2—*Detect evil, detect invisibility, knock, strength, wizard lock;* L3—*Dispel magic, haste, hold undead, infravision, protection from evil (10' radius);* L4—*Detect scrying, emotion, fear, remove curse, wizard eye;* L5—*Avoidance, contact other plane, dismissal, dream, false vision; L6—Legend lore, true seeing*

Background
Van Helsing was born in Leeuwarden, the provincial capital of Friesland. His parents, both scholars, were deeply religious and he was brought up in an environment both nurturing and steeped in the ancient traditions of the Roman Catholic church.

As a youth, Van Helsing traveled with his parents throughout much of Eastern Europe. It was at this time that he became interested in the occult. Before long, this idle curiosity grew into an obsession and he built a vast library of books detailing every aspect of the supernatural. As his knowledge of the subject grew, he began to publish summaries of the ways in which he was able to employ modern scientific methods in his research of mysticism.



By the time he turned thirty, Van Helsing had published some thirty essays on metaphysical matters. At the same time, he pursued his more traditional studies, acquiring degrees in medicine, literature, philosophy, and several other fields.

It should surprise no one that he was eventually recruited by Die Wachtern. As the next decade passed, Van Helsing rose in the ranks of that qabal. Making use of the wealth of lore that Die Wachtern's agents had gathered over the years, he waged a highly successful campaign against the Red Death.

Shortly after Van Helsing's fiftieth birthday, a former student, Dr. John Seward, telegraphed Van Helsing to ask his advice in a most unusual case. A Miss Lucy Westenra was suffering from severe anemia, though no cause could be found for her condition. Van Helsing traveled to London to consult with Dr. Seward, and came to the conclusion that Miss Westenra was being visited by a vampire. He acted promptly, but was unable to save the young woman's life.

Subsequent investigation brought Van Helsing into contact with Mina Harker and, later, her husband Jonathan. Hearing of Harker's experiences in Transylvania, he came to the conclusion that they faced Dracula, the Prince of Vampires himself.

Joining forces with Dr. Seward and a number of his friends, Van Helsing began to hunt the vampire. This noble company drove the ghoul from England and pursued him to the snows of his ancestral home in the Carpathian mountains. There, a brave young American named Quincy Morris struck down the great vampire with his knife, though he himself was mortally wounded.

As might be expected, this success brought him to the attention of Die Wachtern's Inner Circle. Within a year, he was made a member and now heads that most noble qabal.

Van Helsing currently chairs both the Theology and Philosophy departments at the University of Amsterdam. He is frequently consulted by many European governments on historical, theological, and (although it is never publicly acknowledged) supernatural matters. It is rumored that the church depends very heavily upon Van Helsing's knowledge when dealing with the supernatural.

Role-Playing
In a letter to his friend Arthur Holmwood, the noted psychiatrist Dr. John Seward described Van Helsing as a philosopher and metaphysician who has an absolutely open mind, an iron nerve, the temper of an ice-brook, an indomitable resolution, self-command, and tolerance exalted from virtues to blessings. A better description of this man's personality can not be imagined.

Although years of research have given him the ability to cast a great array of spells, he is reluctant to employ these powers. Van Helsing is well aware of the dangers inherent in magic and, as such, he uses it only in situations of the greatest urgency.

Forbidden Lore
Van Helsing is quite probably the world's foremost expert on the occult in general and vampirism in particular. This makes him a very valuable ally, but at the same time a dangerous companion. Few men in the world must endure the Red Death's scrutiny like Abraham Van Helsing. His life, and hence the lives of those around him, is in constant peril.

Dr. John Seward

Alignment: Lawful Good
Class: Tradesman
Kit: Physician
XP Level: 6

Strength: 13
Dexterity: 11
Constitution: 12
Intelligence: 15
Wisdom: 13
Charisma: 10

Armor Class: 10
Hit Points: 27
THAC0: 18
No. of Attacks: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Blackjack, army pistol, shotgun, rapier/foil

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Biology (15), chemistry (15), electricity (13), lang: English (native), lang: Latin (15), medicine (13), psychology (13), SI: phonograph (15)

Background
John Seward was born to a poor, though not impoverished, family in London's East End. His father was a factory worker and his mother a house cleaner. Although he had two brothers and one sister, none of them lived past the age of three.

Seward's parents were determined to see that their son had every opportunity in life. Over the years, they saved enough money to send him to college. Thus it was that the young man found himself enrolled at the University of Amsterdam, studying medicine and psychology under the famous Abraham Van Helsing. The hours of hard work that Seward put in to keep pace with more gifted students won him a place in his instructor's heart. The two became friends and, when Seward returned to England, began a correspondence.

Over the years, Seward's dedication to his work has earned him the respect of his peers. Late in the 1880's, although not yet 30 years old, he became the head of a large asylum in Purfleet.

In 1890, Seward fell in love with a young woman named Lucy Westenra. Although she refused his proposal, the young man remained devoted to her. When she was stricken with an unusual case of anemia, Seward rushed to her side. Unable to help her, he called upon

his former mentor, Abraham Van Helsing, for help. When Miss Westenra died, Van Helsing showed Seward that she had been the victim of a vampire. Vowing to see the young woman's death avenged, Seward joined Van Helsing in his quest to destroy the vampire that had destroyed the woman he loved.

Following that great ordeal, Seward returned to his practice in Purfleet and attempted to forget the nightmare that he had endured. Unlike Jonathan and Mina Harker, who joined Die Wachtern in the wake of their adventure with Abraham Van Helsing, Seward wants nothing more to do with the supernatural.

Role-Playing
Seward is a hard working if not overly imaginative man. He often has trouble accepting the supernatural, even in the wake of his confrontation with Dracula. Seward is quick to discredit as "superstition"—stories that defy more scientific explanations.

Forbidden Lore
Despite his role in the battle against Dracula, Seward remains a man of science. He sees technology as the greatest weapon in mankind's ancient battle against evil. Where men like Van Helsing might battle vampires and werewolves with garlic and wolfsbane, Seward would favor electricity and dynamite.

Lord Godalming

Alignment: Lawful Good
Class: Tradesmen
Kit: Dandy
XP Level: 4

Strength: 12
Dexterity: 12
Constitution: 14
Intelligence: 10
Wisdom: 12
Charisma: 16

Armor Class: 10
Hit Points: 12
THAC0: 19
No. of Attacks: 1

Weapon Proficiencies: Derringer, rapier/foil, breechloading rifle

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Dancing (12), equestrian (14), etiquette (16), history: England (10), hunting (11), Lang: English (native), lang: French (10), savior-faire (16), SI: bureaucracy (10)

Background
Arthur Holmwood's life has always been that of a typical English nobleman. He was born in a country manor, attended the best schools, and had the money and freedom to travel about Europe as he desired. Only recently, with the death of his father in 1890, did he assume the family title and come to face the responsibilities of wealth and property.

At the time of his father's death, however, Holmwood did not much notice his sudden change of station. Barely had all of his father's earthly affairs been sorted out when his fiancée, Lucy Westenra, died as well. Although he believed that she had died from some unusual form of anemia, it was shown to him that this was not the case.

Much to his horror, Godalming learned that his fiancee had been slain by the vampire lord, Dracula. Worse yet, in the wake of her death, she had herself become an undead monster. With the aid of Abraham Van Helsing, Godalming saw to it that Miss Westenra's undead form was finally destroyed and her spirit allowed to find peace at last.

Following this ordeal, he joined Van Helsing and several friends in the battle against Dracula. Because of his great wealth and the prestige associated with his title, Godalming played an important role in the final defeat of that fiend.

Quincy Morris

Alignment:	Lawful Good
Class:	Soldier
Kit:	Cavalryman (Texas Ranger)
XP Level:	7
Strength:	15
Dexterity:	14
Constitution:	16
Intelligence:	12
Wisdom:	10
Charisma:	12
Armor Class:	10
Hit Points:	50
THAC0:	14
No. of Attacks:	1

Weapon Proficiencies: Army revolver, dagger, derringer, repeating rifle, sabre, shotgun

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Equestrian (16), lang: Comanche (12), lang: English (native), lang: Spanish (12), marksman: army revolver (+2), marksman: repeating rifle (+2), quick draw: army revolver (-2)

Background

Quincy Morris is the only one of the company that hunted Dracula to have perished in the adventure. As his knife was the weapon that struck down the vampire, it seems only fitting that he be remembered here.

Morris was born in Texas, the son of a Confederate Officer who resettled there in the wake of the American Civil War. Like his father, Quincy had a keen mind for military matters. It is hardly surprising that he joined the Texas Rangers promptly after high school.

As a Ranger, Morris proved himself to be as noble and loyal an officer as any member of that order. His reputation for fairness and determination brought him quick promotion and numerous honors.

In 1889, Morris was wounded and forced to travel to London in order to consult Dr. John Seward, a nerve specialist. Under his care, Morris was soon fully recovered. While undergoing therapy, Morris fell in love with a young woman named Lucy Westenra. Although she rejected his proposal, the two remained close until her death in 1890.

When it was revealed to Morris that Miss Westenra's death had not been a natural one, he eagerly joined the hunt for her killer. Thus, the last months of Morris's life were spent in pursuit of the great vampire, Dracula.

When Dracula was finally confronted high in the mountains of Transylvania, Morris struck him down with a knife that had been in his family for generations. Sadly, Morris was himself mortally wounded in this showdown.

Role-Playing

Since the death of his beloved Lucy, Godalming has become very morose. His life is empty, and there is no joy to be found in his heart.

This is not to say that he neglects his duties, however. The Godalmings have always recognized that the privileges they enjoy carry with them great responsibilities.

In addition, he recognizes the debt that he owes to Van Helsing. As such, he tries to make himself and the influence that he wields available to Van Helsing and the other members of Die Wachtern. Nothing that he does, however, eases the sense of loss that he feels over the premature passing of his beloved Lucy.

Forbidden Lore

Although he no longer has any adventuring spirit himself, Godalming recognizes the importance of the work that men like Jonathan Harker and Abraham Van Helsing are doing in the world and is always willing to help them. There are times when only political influence and great wealth can overcome a problem, and Lord Godalming has both.

Role-Playing

A skilled solder, Morris was a crackshot with both the rifle and revolver. He impressed all who knew him with his eloquence, manners, and kind heart.

Upon meeting him, Abraham Van Helsing remarked that, if America could continue to breed sons of his quality, the United States would be a nation to be reckoned with for centuries to come.

Forbidden Lore

Many have marveled at the fact that Morris's knife was able not only to harm Dracula but also to destroy him. Most experts on the undead, Van Helsing among them, believe that such weapons are useless against the undead.

Shortly after the battle against Dracula, Van Helsing put forth the theory that it was not the weapon, but rather the noble soul that drove it into the vampire that proved fatal to Dracula. Others have expressed the opinion that the weapon must have been blessed at some point or that the ethereal hand of Lucy Westenra's spirit guided Morris's stroke.

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Weasel Games

We Have Seen the Enemy ...

by Lester Smith

For the past few months, I have been discussing some of the perks and pitfalls of weaselly play in role-playing sessions. Of course when taken to the extreme, underhanded, back-stabbing, cutthroat play can ruin role-playing campaigns ... and even friendships. No one wants to play with individuals who are out for their own enjoyment alone, at the expense of everyone else. But among players who trust one another, weasely characters can add to the satisfaction of a campaign ... especially if they are allowed to work out their conflicts, maturing and developing respect for one another as a result.

Thief characters are perhaps the most prone to try to "get one over" on the rest of a party, but other characters are certainly just as capable of doing so. There is nothing to stop a merchant PC, for instance, from taking a dislike to a guardsman PC and trying to make his life difficult—as in the example of my friend Jim's boomerang thrower (see last month's column), who spent an entire campaign trying to hit my character from behind in every combat, while seeking to make it look as if he were aiming at my PC's opponents.

But nothing says that inter-PC conflict has to be anywhere near this blatant to add richness to a campaign. As with the use of spices in cooking, subtlety often yields the best flavor.

Consider the case of the berserker. As a player character, the berserker generally has nothing against his fellow PCs. As a matter of fact, he is to be valued for his fierceness in combat. But everyone knows that once he enters that berserk rage, there is a chance that he will do harm to his friends before being able to snap out of it. And there is fun to be had in discovering how the party will come to deal with that possibility. (Some old buddies of mine used to lasso my berserker character around the neck and choke him into unconsciousness to break the *berserkergang.)*

A slightly more subtle conflict can be had in including a wizard in a party from TSR's old *Conan* RPG. I've always admired the rule that requires wizards in that game to buy a magic-related disadvantage each time they learn a new spell. Particularly interesting, I think, is the "Madness" disadvantage. With it, the wizard has a one percent chance of going temporarily mad the first day after gaining the disadvantage, a two percent chance the second day, and so on, until the character finally snaps. Once that happens, the game master takes control of the character for one day of game time, acting out the madness in whatever manner seems fitting. (As game master, I typically played up some minor spell of the mad character to ridiculous proportions, as in the case of the wizard with some small ability in telekinesis, who slept blithely through one night while his subconscious kept the party's every edged weapon dancing in the air above the campsite, forcing the other PCs to spend the night shivering outside the firelight.) Sanity returns to the character on the following day, and the chance of going mad again reverts to one percent that day, two percent the next, and so on. It doesn't take long for the wizard's companions to begin counting the days since the character last went "nuts," and adapting their adventuring plans to account for the possibility of it happening again soon. Sure, everyone knows that the wizard consciously intends them no harm, but the implicit threat adds dramatic tension (while also making magic seem mysterious and dangerous, which I certainly appreciate).

Other disadvantages, such as "Animal Aversion" and "Disfigurement," play the same sort of role, forcing the party to take them into consideration when making plans. Think of the difficulty involved in trying to travel quickly, for instance, when horses shy away from the party's wizard, or in attempting to enter a city incognito, when the magic user has eyes slitted like a cat's and one webbed hand. I love it.

Some role-playing games go even further in playing on this sort of inter-character tension, subtle though that tension may be. The AD&D® game's PLANESCAPE™ campaign setting and the *Vampire: The Masquerade* game both define what a character's faction or clan thinks of characters from other factions or clans. The sheer amount of "attitude" projected as a result is wonderful. Though characters may still work together toward a common goal, the fact that they are all doing it for different, possibly even conflicting, reasons is continually evident to everyone involved, and the role-playing is all the richer for it. And the *Amber Diceless Role-Playing* game actually builds a bit of *player* rivalry into the first steps of character design, forcing players to compete in an auction for the best rankings in the game's four character attributes. This nicely parallels the internecine struggles in the fiction from which the game is drawn, setting the stage for the sorts of uneasy alliances to which player characters within that game are prone.

But most impressive, I think, is the player who weasels his or her own character simply for sake of story. I'm reminded of a fantasy campaign I ran in which the main PC was a barbarian prince seeking to raise an army to overthrow the evil man who had murdered his father and usurped his throne. We were using Heritage's old *Barbarian Prince* solitaire board game for the campaign map and random encounters, and Lion Rampant's old *Whimsey* cards to allow some measure of player control over the developing plot. In one instance, the prince had made a moving oration to a band of savages the night before, convincing almost the entire village to join his party. But the next day, when the fledgling army happened upon a herd of quasi-triceratopses grazing in a glade, the prince's player decided to play a "Turn for the Worse" card, just for the fun of it. I decided that this meant that the bull of the herd had scented the party and led the rest in a stampede toward it. In the resulting confusion, more than half of the villagers disappeared (giving up the quest and going back home), so the prince's cause certainly suffered as a result. But the scene was so much fun that we all applauded the player, and I awarded him extra experience points at the end of the session. Anyone who hassles his own character, just to entertain the rest of the gaming group, is certainly worthy of accolades.

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The Living Galaxy

The Son of Character Bonding, SF Campaigns, and TV Shows

by Roger E. Moore

This installment continues last issue's look at prime-time TV shows and what they can teach us about role-playing campaigns. In particular, we are looking for ways to give player characters common settings, foes, and goals to keep PCs (and players) working together for long periods of gaming time.

You may not think watching TV could teach much about role-playing, but consider this: An employee of a famous non-TSR game company once told me that many of the adventures produced by his company for their SFRPG (science-fiction role-playing game) were derived from episodes of *The Rockford Files.* Think about it.

Anyway, as before, I've categorized a number of TV shows according to the campaigns they will produce if used as models for science-fiction game set-ups. *Bonanza,* for instance, is a great model for a Pioneer Family campaign, and *The Love Boat* (gasp!) is a model for a Mobile Home Base campaign. (Both campaign types were detailed in issue #104.) It's my belief that even a non-SF show has much to offer Game Masters and players contemplating a particular campaign style.

Much of the information herein was culled from the pages of *The Complete Directory to Prime Time Network TV Shows, 1946-Present,* by Tim Brooks and Earle Marsh (Ballantine Books, 1992). I cannot recommend this book enough for the hundreds of gaming ideas it will spark in a creative GM's mental fireplace. Look for a copy and settle in for an entertaining evening of reading.

Author's notes: Although the proper style for writing the title of a TV show is to use quotes, I've switched to italics since so many shows are involved and space is limited. Also, I was rather liberal at times in categorizing "Mundane" and "SF" shows; most fantasy shows were put in the "SF" group, and most ultramodern and high-tech shows went into "Mundane."

"Synd." means the show was syndicated; "n/d" means no show dates are available. Some dates are approximate (e.g., 199?); I was unable to get accurate information. I did not list rerun dates, and I'm sure I've missed a few good shows that readers will later tell me about, but this should be complete enough for most gamers' needs. By the way, DuMont was a very early and innovative TV network that went out of business in the 1950s.

Law Enforcers

Mundane Models: *Adam-12* (NBC 1968-1975; synd. 1989+), *The Andy Griffith Show / Andy of Mayberry* (CBS 1960-8), *Baretta* (ABC 1975-8), *Barney Miller* (ABC 1975-82), *Blue Thunder* (ABC 1984), *Broken Arrow* (ABC 1956-60), *Cagney & Lacey* (CBS 1982-8), CHiPs (1977-1983), *Columbo* (NBC 1971-90), *The Commish* (ABC 199?-now), *Dan August* (ABC 1970-1; CBS 1973-5), *Dragnet* (NBC 1952-70), *The F.B.I.* (ABC 1965-74), *Gunsmoke* (CBS 1955-75), *Hawaii Five-O* (CBS 1968-80), *Highway Patrol* (synd. 1955-9), *Hill Street Blues* (NBC 1981-7), *Hunter* (NBC 1984-91), *In the Heat of the Night* (NBC 1988-now), *Ironside* (NBC 1967-75), *Kojak* (CBS 1973-8, ABC 1989-90), *Laredo* (NBC 1965-7), *Law & Order* (NBC 1990-?), *The Lawless Years* (NBC 1959-61), *The Life and Legend of Wyatt Earp* (ABC 1955-1961), *Manhunt* (1959-61), *McCloud* (NBC 1970-7), *McMillan and Wife* (NBC 1971-7), *Miami Vice* (NBC 1984-9), *The Mod Squad* (ABC 1968-73), *NYPD* (ABC 1967-9), *NYPD Blue* (ABC 199?-now), *Naked City* (ABC 1958-63), *Nakia* (ABC 1974), *Night Heat* (CBS 1985-91), *Ohara* (ABC 1987-8), *Police Woman* (NBC 1974-8), *Rin Tin Tin K-9 Cop* (The Family Channel, 1987-?), *The Rookies* (ABC 1972-8), *Sam* (CBS 1978), *Sergeant Preston of the Mounties* (CBS 1955-8), *Shaft* (CBS 1973-4), *Sheriff of Cochise / U.S. Marshal* (1956-60), *The Silent Force* (ABC 1970-1), *Starsky and Hutch* (ABC 1975-9), *Street Hawk* (ABC 1985), *The Streets of San Francisco* (ABC 1972-7), *S.W.A.T.* (ABC 1975-6), *T.J. Hooker* (ABC/CBS 1982-7), *True Blue* (NBC 1989-90), *21 Jump Street* (Fox 1987-90), *The Untouchables* (ABC 1959-63), *Walker, Texas Ranger* (CBS 199?-now), *Walking Tall* (NBC 1981), *Wiseguy* (CBS 1987-90).

SF Models: *Alien Nation* (Fox 1989-91), *Robocop* (1994-now), *Space Patrol* (ABC, 1951-2), *Time Trax* (synd.? 199?-now).

Characters: All of the PCs belong to or are allied with a single law-enforcement organization. The PCs must be smart, disciplined, organized, confident, and determined to succeed, but must act at all times within the boundaries of the law, or else see their work undone by later legal proceedings. (If the PCs screw up, they might also be fined, demoted, fired, or even arrested.) The PCs are usually well armed, well trained, and well equipped, and can count on sizable backup if they ask for assistance. The use of elite PC police forces is strongly advised, as they will have the best training, best equipment, and most challenging missions.

Some PCs might act as undercover cops, others as investigative detectives, and yet others as patrol cops who use various vehicles (cars, motorcycles, helicopters, horses, planes, boats, etc.) to monitor a broad area, deter crime by their presence, stop crimes in progress, assist victims, and pursue/capture criminals. A special task force might include cops from various agencies working to stop a certain type of criminal activity or to work against a certain criminal gang. Consider the SF equivalent of putting together a team consisting of a K-9 officer, an FBI agent, a DEA undercover cop, and a Texas Ranger. (*Broken Arrow,* a Western, concerned the law-enforcement efforts of two friends, an Apache chief and a white Indian agent, fighting injustice on and around a reservation.)

When you look over the list of "cop" TV shows, think about the different types of heroes in each. Teenaged undercover agents appear in *The Mod Squad* and *21 Jump Street,* heavily armed commandoes in *S.W.A.T.,* small-town sheriffs in *The Andy Griffith Show* and *Walking Tall,* and so on. Look at the ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds shown in *Ohara* (Asian-American), *Nakia* (Native American), *Shaft* (black American), and *In the*

Heat of the Night (Southern). Look at *Ironside* (wheelchair-bound detective), *Robocop* (cyborg), *Alien Nation* (nonhuman), *Sam* (human and dog), *McMillan and Wife* (married couple), *Columbo* (works alone), *Starsky & Hutch* (work as twosome), and *Barney Miller* (large, diverse team). Find matches with the PC set-up your campaign has, and use those ideas in your adventures.

Shared Goals: Uphold the law of your country and maintain social order by detecting and catching lawbreakers or preventing criminal acts, by working within an established legal framework and with the assistance of other legally appointed law enforcers.

Setting: Almost every TV show focusing on law enforcement takes place in a large, crime-ridden city of seedy character. Los Angeles is greatly over-represented here (being the old favorite for detective-fiction writers such as Dashell Hammett), but Miami, Honolulu, New York City, and Chicago come in for their share of attention. (Honolulu isn't very seedy, but it has a strong touch of the exotic, which makes it attractive.) You might also consider a crime-ridden national capital, such as Moscow or (it pains me to say this) Washington, D.C., to mix power politics with your crime-busting.

Shows placed in a less-civilized period of history, like the Old West, tend to focus on large frontier towns like Dodge City, with much of the wilderness around as part of the adventuring scenery. Alien worlds or space stations have their own "local color" and special police problems, as a few episodes from *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* would show. Compare with the settings noted later for private troubleshooters.

Commentary: Most real-life crime is very dull stuff: break-ins, trespassing, petty theft, traffic violations, etc. The "exciting" stuff—bank robbery, murder, kidnapping, hijacking—still requires a considerable amount of routine activity like paperwork, talking to witnesses, etc. The "too exciting" stuff—political assassinations, armed attacks on police officers, nuclear/chemical terrorism, mass hostage taking, natural disasters—is frankly so terrifying and life-threatening that no one with any common sense looks forward to it. Of course, the "too exciting" stuff is going to be the daily routine of most elite role-playing heroes.

The limits of human criminality seem to reach new depths every year, but the limits of law-enforcement techniques and technology are on the rise, too. The GM should carefully examine current events for new advances in law enforcement: DNA testing, robotic bomb-disposal systems, nonlethal weapons, laser-targeted rifles, improved body armor, complex data-retrieval systems, the latest eavesdropping equipment, etc.

It would help greatly to toss peculiar crimes and criminals, exotic locales, and unusual equipment into scenarios. Look at espionage and superhero games, novels, and TV shows for ideas you can use in police adventures. A master criminal on the level of Fu Manchu (who even had his own syndicated TV series, *The Adventures of Fu Manchu,* from 1956 onward) or Wo Fat (of *Hawaii Five-O*) is an excellent campaign touch, as is a worldwide criminal organization like T.H.R.U.S.H. (from *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.,* in the next section).

The limits of human criminality seem to reach new depths every year, but the limits of law-enforcement techniques and technology are on the rise, too.

Recent movies of interest to SF-cop campaigners include *Alien Nation, Soylent Green, Slipstream, Robocop* (all three), *Outland, Demolition Man, Bladerunner, Mad Max, Split Second,* and *Time Cop. Code of Silence,* though not an SF film, had a highly amusing (and effective!) police robot. See this column in issue #73 for more ideas on this topic.

Examples: TSR's STAR FRONTIERS® game was founded on the concept of police PCs, who were members of an interstellar group called Star Law. R. Talsorian's *Cyberpunk 2.0.2.0.* line includes *Protect & Serve,* a highly recommended accessory adaptable to police-PC campaigns for many RPGs. Myrmidon Press's *Manhunter* game focuses on SF bounty-hunter activity, and so fits this campaign style well. (Also look for *Rifts Manhunter* from Palladium.)

An out-of-print RPG from Task Force Games, *Delta Force* (about the military antiterrorist commando unit), and an extinct game from Fantasy Games Unlimited, *PSI World* (about psionics and the police), would be of interest, too. You may wish to mix and match elements from several games and supplements to get your best and most varied campaign.

"Future cop" campaigns could easily develop in RPGs as diverse as the *Traveller: The New Era, Star Trek, Shadowrun,* TOP SECRET/S.I.™ *F.R.E.E.Lancers, Twilight: 2000, Merc: 2000, Torg, Rifts, Shatterzone, FTL: 2448, Bureau 13, Beyond the Supernatural, Call of Cthulhu,* AMAZING ENGINE® *Kromosome, Dark Conspiracy,* and *2300 AD* games, to name only a few. Espionage games are especially easy to adapt to a cop theme (*Ninjas & Superspies, James Bond 007*). Even marginal science-fantasy games like TSR's AD&D® SPELLJAMMER® or GDW's *Space: 1889* games could absorb interplanetary-cop campaigns.

Steve Jackson Games's *GURPS* system includes many supplements worth pillaging for non-*GURPS* set-ups in SF-cop campaigns: *Aliens, Autoduel, Cyberpunk, Espionage, High-Tech, Illuminati, Martial Arts, Psionics, Robots, Space, Special Ops, Ultra-Tech, Vehicles.* All are great for *GURPS* cop campaigns, too, of course. Given the *Time Trax* TV model, in which a future-world cop races back in time to capture a large number of escaped future criminals, the many *GURPS* historical supplements and the *Time Travel* book are also valuable here.

Big Brother's Troubleshooters

Mundane Models: *The A-Team* (NBC 1983-7), *Airwolf* (CBS 1984-6), *The Avengers* (ABC 1966-9), *The Bionic Woman* (ABC/NBC 1976-8), *Charlie's Angels* (ABC 1976-81), *Get Smart* (NBC/CBS 1965-70), *The Girl from U.N.C.L.E.* (NBC 1966-7), *The Highwayman* (NBC 1988), *The Invisible Man* (CBS 1958-60; NBC 1975-6), *I Spy* (NBC 1965-8), *It Takes a Thief* (ABC 1968-70), *Jericho* (CBS 1966-7), *Knight Rider* (NBC 1982-6), *MacGuiver* (ABC 1985-91), *The Man Called X* (synd. 1956+), *The Man from Blackhawk* (ABC 1959-60), *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (NBC 1964-8), *Mission: Impossible* (CBS 1966-73; ABC 1988-

90), *O.S.S.* (ABC 1957-8), *The Protectors* (synd. 1972-3), *Scarecrow and Mrs. King* (CBS 1983-7), *Search* (NBC 1972-3), *Secret Agent* (CBS 1965-6), *The Six Million Dollar Man* (ABC 1974-8), *Tales of Wells Fargo* (NBC 1957-62), *The Wild Wild West* (CBS 1965-70), *The Wizard* (CBS 1986-7).

SF Models: *The Man from Atlantis* (NBC 1977-78), *TekWar* (USA Network, 199?-now), *UFO* (synd. 1972), *The X-Files* (Fox 1993-now).

Characters: The PCs here form a well-trained, tightly knit, heavily armed and equipped team functioning as an investigative or espionage unit or as paramilitary commando force, usually acting in complete or partial secrecy. The group is given its missions by a limited number of commanders or case officers (often only one person of concealed identity) who work in a secret capacity for a single government, multinational organization, or large private corporation. The group might also function as an elite or secret law-enforcement team, addressing special crimes against its agency or nation, or as a military rescue or antiterrorist force dealing with foreign or insurgent forces.

Solo PCs in such a campaign would have to be powerful agents, on the level of James Bond or Derek Flint. See this column in issues #93 and 94 for more on one-player, one-GM campaigns.

Characters in any event must be intelligent, resourceful, confident, and ruthlessly determined to accomplish their goals. They are expected to be highly independent of command, and thus able to operate out of contact with superiors for long periods of time, yet must function perfectly as a team and have the strongest possible bonds within their group and to their agency.

Looking at the relevant TV show lists, we see the expected swarm of government secret agents and paranormal investigators, but there are overt corporate agents (*Tales of Wells Fargo*), government sponsored technologists/scientists (*The Wizard*), reformed criminals (*It Takes a Thief*), and even an insurance investigator (*The Man from Blackhawk*). The involvement of "normal" civilians in such work cannot be ruled out (*Scarecrow and Mrs. King*).

Shared Goals: Defend your nation's (or agency's) interests, goals, and plans by covert (and possibly illegal) means, particularly in the areas of intelligence gathering/analysis and neutralization of your side's most dangerous enemies and their plans.

Setting: The best settings for a focused campaign of this type would be an entire nation, continent, or world. Adventures are typically far-ranging and take place in the widest variety of locales possible. An SF campaign of this type could easily cross over to other worlds, though there should be a definite command center (government offices or corporate facilities) around which the adventures take place.

A team mission to find and defeat extraterrestrial or occult foes is a powerful bond; it's served *Call of Cthulhu* game players well for years. A powerful human enemy bent on conquering the world, like the crime syndicate T.H.R.U.S.H. (*The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*) or the mad scientist Dr. Loveless (*The Wild Wild West*), can be even better, for reasons detailed in this column in issue #57.

A team mission to find and defeat extraterrestrial or occult foes is a powerful bond; it's served *Call of Cthulhu* game players well for years.

Commentary: As noted earlier, the PCs in this campaign type will sometimes work outside the law—no small matter if legal authorities catch wind of their actions. Caution and discretion are advised. Covert approval from superiors might come despite official denials of the same. Public acknowledgement of the group's existence might even be denied and concealed.

So-called paranormal investigations can occur in an SF campaign of this style. Look for resource material in books about UFOs, ghosts, lake monsters, etc.). Ultramodern campaigns, set in or just after the year 2000, can add all sorts of nice, trendy SF bits like pills that alter your personality, powered armor, intelligent computers, etc.

"Big Brother's Troubleshooters" missions should generally be dangerous in the extreme, each undertaken only when normal methods of resolving a particular crisis have proven useless. PC turnover (i.e., character death) should not be too regular a thing, but shouldn't be unexpected. Given the PCs' huge resources and great levels of training, their foes should be at least equal to them in power and often should be far stronger, unkillable as entities even if their plans are sometimes thwarted. This, of course, makes for long-term campaigns.

Examples: All of the games mentioned for the Law Enforcers group could easily handle this sort of campaign. I would also include games with broad military conflicts, such as the *Star Wars, BattleTech/MechWarrior, Legionnaire,* AMAZING ENGINE BUGHUNTERS® and *Galactos Barrier, Mekton II/Mekton Z, Robotech,* and *Macross II* games. Altered-Earth games could encompass commando missions (e.g., GAMMA WORLD®, *Rifts, Shadowrun,* and *Torg* games), and science-fantasy set-ups could do so as well (e.g., AD&D SPELLJAMMER®, *Space: 1889,* and AMAZING ENGINE MAGITECH™ games). A few modern-era spy games (*James Bond 007; Mercenaries, Spies, and Private Eyes*) could be adjusted to include SF elements.

Commando-team raids into alternate-history Earths are possible, too; see this column in issue #84 for a list of appropriate games. (Tri-Tac's Fringeworthy and GURPS *Time Travel* systems stand out in particular). Time travel opens up whole new vistas here, and GURPS "time troubleshooters" campaigns will benefit from that system's wealth of historical material, with a set-up similar to that in BTRC's *TimeLords* or 54°40' Orphyte's *TimeMaster* games.

Private Troubleshooters

Mundane Models: *The Adventures of Ellery Queen* (plus various similar titles; DuMont 1950-1, ABC 1951-2, NBC 1958-9, NBC 1975-6), *Barnaby Jones* (CBS 1973-80), *Cannon* (CBS 1971-6), *Harry-O* (ABC 1971-6), *Hart to Hart* (ABC 1979-1984), *Hawaiian Eye* (ABC 1959-63), *Honey West* (ABC 1965-6), *The Lone Ranger* (ABC 1949-57), *Magnum, P.I.* (CBS 1980-8), *Mannix* (CBS 1967-75), *The Manhunter* (CBS 1974-5), *Matt Houston* (ABC 1982-5), *Matt Helm* (ABC 1975-6), *Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer* (CBS 1984-7), *Moonlighting* (ABC 1985-9), *Murder, She Wrote* (CBS 1984-now), *The Nancy Drew Mysteries* (ABC 1977-8), *Outlaws* (CBS 1986-7), *P.S. I Luv U* (CBS 1991-?), *Peter Gunn*

(NBC/ABC 1958-61), *Primus* (synd. 1971), *Probe* (ABC 1988), *Remington Steele* (NBC 1982-7), *Riptide* (NBC 1984-6), *The Rockford Files* (NBC 1974-80), *Sea Hunt* (synd. 1957-61, 1987-8), *Sable* (ABC 1987-8), *The Saint* (NBC 1967-9), *77 Sunset Strip* (ABC 1958-64), *Simon & Simon* (CBS 1974-5), T. and T. (synd./The Family Channel 1988+), *Tarzan* (NBC 1966-8), *T.H.E. Cat* (NBC 1966-7), *Vega$* (ABC 1978-81), *Wanted: Dead or Alive* (CBS 1958-61), *Whiz Kids* (CBS 1983-4), *Wolf* (CBS 1989-91), *Zorro* (ABC 1957-9).

SF Models: *Batman* (ABC 1966-8), *Captain Video and His Video Rangers* (DuMont 1949-55), *The Green Hornet* (ABC 1966-7), *Kolchak: The Night Stalker* (ABC 1974-5), *The Real Ghostbusters* (animated, CBS, n/d), *Tucker's Witch* (CBS 1982-3).

Characters: The PCs in this campaign are essentially free-lance investigators of every sort. They might be private detectives, corporate consultants, self-motivated (unpaid) investigators, and anticriminal vigilantes—even a few superheros. These PCs are often quite unlike regular cops, spies, or soldiers, ranging from precocious youths (like the famed Encyclopedia Brown of children's literature, or the technophile kids in *Whiz Kids*) to middle-aged mystery writers (*Murder, She Wrote*). Whether they are ex-convicts (*The Rockford Files*), reformed burglars (*T.H.E. Cat*), barbarians (*Tarzan*), scuba divers (Sea Hunt), crooks who prey on crooks (*The Saint*), bored millionaires (*Matt Houston*), broke ex-cops (*Harry-O*), or even time-transposed ex-outlaws from the Old West (*Outlaws*), the only common elements each of these characters shares are an extraordinary reasoning ability and a desire to right wrongs.

Many of these characters operate without the direct support of any normal law-enforcement or military agency, and none are employed by such agencies. In some cases, their activities mark them as criminals, and they might be hunted by regular military or law-enforcement forces.

In many ways, private troubleshooters make up the perfect RPG character team. They can do whatever they want, whenever they want, so long as their money holds out.

Shared Goals: Defend the interests of your paying client (or the interests you perceive belonging to your society at large, if you right wrongs on your own) through whatever legal means are available. Certain covert and illegal activities might be used if the situation requires them.

Setting: Private troubleshooters (like law-enforcement officers) find their steadiest employment in big cities with more than their share of troubles to shoot. Los Angeles, Honolulu, New York City, Chicago, and Miami are popular spots, but PIs have a wider range than police officers do. Locations can encompass the undersea world, orbital space, or a whole continent (if not a planet). Obviously, the broader the geographic range, the better paying the missions and (usually) the richer the PIs.

Commentary: In many ways, private troubleshooters make up the perfect RPG character team. They can do whatever they want, whenever they want, so long as their money holds out. They can set their own goals and give themselves their own missions. If the players are highly independent, this set-up will suit them well. Of course, PC finances will affect their short-term activities.

Examples: All of the RPGs noted in the two previous groups (Law Enforcers and Big Brother's Troubleshooters) work perfectly well with this set-up, which includes the broadest possible range of adventures and character types.

Next month: The last episode of the miniseries. See you then.

☆ ☆ ☆ Dispel Confusion Winner ☆ ☆ ☆

Can a mage tattoo a low-level spell or two onto his arms so that he wouldn't need a spell book to memorize them?

David Haendler
Quincy, MA

Clever question! It's possible, but there are limitations. I reviewed the notes on spell books in the Dungeon Master® Guide *(pp 42-43), and this is what I have discerned: Spell books do not require specialized writing surfaces as scrolls do. They are merely records of information and are not imbued with magical energy. However, there are several restrictions to using tattoos to record spells.*

First is the matter of length. Spells are said to require a number of pages equal to the spell level plus 1d6-1 additional pages. Thus, only the lowest level spells could be tattooed on the body. Second, the tattoos would have to be readily visible to the reader. Only the hands, arms, front of legs, and the chest (upside-down, of course).

Third, tattoos of this size would permanently reduce a character's Charisma by 1 point per spell. Finally, there's always a chance of infection with so much tattooing. I 'd require a Constitution check at -1 per page. Failure results in an incapacitating infection for 3-30 days, plus the permanent loss of 1 point of Constitution. It's all a heck of a way to leave your mark in the world.

—H

Talon's Tattoo Parlor

The Living City's Emporium of Epidermal Illustrations

by Eric L. Boyd

Ol'Town, also known as Fishtown, is a poor but proud section of Ravens Bluff. Crammed into a back alley along the city wall is an unsavory looking establishment that is surprisingly popular with many wealthy rogues, adventurers, and other scoundrels. Talon's Tattoo Parlor has a steady stream of customers, primarily sailors and other city "toughs," but also including the occasional adventurer.

A patron daring to enter Talon's establishment must ascend a rickety flight of steps to the second floor of an old wooden house. The steps run along the outside wall of the building. The first floor of the building houses a decrepit unnamed tavern patronized by sailors. The door to Talon's Tattoo Parlor is wide but low (approximately 5' high), and it opens into a single room with a 12' high attic ceiling and no other exit. In the back corner, a ragged curtain shields a large unkempt bed, a washbowl, and chamber pot. Several wooden benches line the walls, and a large swivel chair resides in the center of the room next to a table of tattooing instruments and inks. The room is always extremely well lit by several bright spheres of light along the floor, walls, and ceiling (provided by *continual light* spells).

During the late afternoon and early evening, 0-7 customers and friends will be present, along with Talon Darkoak himself. There is a 95% chance per patron that he or she is a 0-level sailor, dockhand, or thug. The remaining patrons are adventurers (usually warriors or thieves) or jaded nobles out on a lark (accompanied by sufficiently powerful friends or underlings to ensure their safety in this part of town).

Talon Darkoak is the offspring of an ill-fated, drunken coupling between the first son of a prominent noble family of Raven's Bluff and a female ogre slave serving as cook in a tavern in far away Glister. Talon's father, the future Lord Whiteoak VIII, was a member of a band of adventurers known as the Company of the Whimsical Wyvern. The Wyverns were composed of jaded young nobles and former pirates. They had been quite successful and settled down "respectably" in Raven's Bluff before becoming bored with daily life. Their escapades usually involved indifferent cruelty and random drunken violence. The future Lord Whiteoak thought little of his drunken fling—until two years later, when a bawling child was deposited on the doorstep of the family estate with a crude note explaining its parentage. The child was definitely a Whiteoak, according to the distinctive "White Oak" birthmark on its left shoulder; the family had little choice but to accept the bastard offspring.

By the time the young half-ogre came of age, his ogrish parentage was painfully obvious in his appearance, making him a monstrous outcast among his peers, despite his bright and active mind. As a cruel jest, the other children in the Whiteoak estate had nicknamed the young half-ogre "Talon," after his father's ugliest dog. After several years of childish cruelties, a visiting great-aunt, Tabatha Whiteoak, took pity on the young unwanted half-breed and offered to raise him at her distant country manor. Lord Whiteoak VII leaped at the opportunity to get rid of this unwanted grandson, so Talon was raised in relative anonymity by the kindly spinster.

The rest of Talon's childhood was peacefully bucolic. Lady Tabatha discovered the boy's talent for many forms of artistic expression, particularly his penchant for giving himself and the manor staff numerous tattoos of incredible detail and beauty. Before her death, Lady Tabatha bequeathed Talon a goodly sum of gold and several containers of magical pigments that had been stored in the manor's vault for over two centuries, a legacy of a distant ancestor, the archmage Alzennak. Talon moved back to Raven's Bluff, without ever making contact with his kinfolk, and set up Talon's Tattoo Parlor, where he has worked ever since.

Nowadays Talon has a well-deserved reputation for being one of the best tattoo artists in Raven's Bluff. Many sailors are loyal patrons of his establishment whenever they are in port. Possessing a tattoo created by Talon is something of a status symbol among sailors throughout the ports of the Inner Sea and toughs throughout the city. Talon usually charges 1 gold coin per square inch of tattoo, a steep price, but well worth it to his customers.

Many adventurers and rogues prize Talon's talents for a different reason. For an even steeper price—50 gold

coins per square inch—Talon is willing to tattoo an image of a short sword, dagger, key, lockpick, playing card, or other small object using Alzennak's marvelous pigments. Many warriors and rogues find this literally gives them an ace (or blade or lockpick) up their sleeve. Talon is often asked to obscure the presence of the tattooed object in a field of normal tattoos (at the regular rate, or course). It is only possible to detect the presence of such a marvelous pigment tattoo by employing a *detect magic* spell. The city watch is aware of this trick, but there is little they can do to stop it, as there is nothing illegal in what Talon is doing—only in how his customers potentially use the tattoos.

The ceiling, floor and walls of Talon's establishment were covered with *continual light* spells by a grateful priest of Tempus in part to hide the location of his pots of *marvelous pigment* from unwanted *detect magic* spells. Talon keeps his three pots of *Nolzur's* and approximately six pots of *Alzennak's marvelous pigments* scattered throughout his establishment in secret cubbyholes. He keeps the remainder of his stock in hidden locations throughout Ol'Town.

Talon Darkoak

Male Half-Ogre
Chaotic Good (worships Ilmater)

Strength	17
Intelligence	12
Wisdom	12
Dexterity	12
Constitution	15
Charisma	10
Comeliness	6
AC:	7
Hit Points:	22 (2+6 Hit Dice)
THAC0:	17
Age:	53
Height:	7'7"
Weight:	303
Hair/Eyes:	Bald/Blue-gray

Weapon Proficiencies: Club

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Artistic ability (tattooing) (19), Common tongue (native language), brewing (12), carpentry (17), ogrish (12)

Magic Items: *Nolzur's marvelous pigments* (3 pots), *Alzennak's marvelous pigments* (12+ pots)

Talon Darkoak typically wears a leather apron that gives him +1 AC protection and hangs a stout wooden club from his low-slung belt. At first glance, Talon appears to be a dumb, ugly, violent brute. His hairless head and body are almost completely covered with intricately detailed tattoos of great beauty. Those rare individuals who take the time to get to know him find him clever, cheerful, straightforward, artistically gifted, and very tolerant. The half-ogre is slow to anger and will engage in physical combat only to defend himself. Talon looks to Ilmater to persevere through life's many hardships. He has many friends among adventuring bands and sailors who will defend him or avenge him as necessary.

Talon has assumed the name "Darkoak" as a deliberate comment on his relation with his human kinfolk, the noble family of Lord and Lady Whiteoak who jointly share a single seat in the Council of Lords. In his spare time, Talon enjoys brewing his own dark beer—which he sells to the tavern on the first floor—and helps rebuild the tavern's wood furniture after frequent drunken brawls by the patrons. Unlike most half-ogres, Talon has no truly monstrous traits, a tribute to the good upbringing he received from Lady Tabatha Whiteoak.

Alzennak's Marvelous Pigments

XP Value: 500 per stone or pot

Alzennak was a plane-traveling archmage who lived near present-day Raven's Bluff over 400 years ago. On an alternate Prime Material Plane known as Oerth, Alzennak discovered a magical substance known as *Nolzur's marvelous pigments* and brought them back to Faerûn. The archmage was fascinated by the potential of the pigments, and he recreated the formula necessary to fabricate the pigments that are commonly used among spellcasters today.

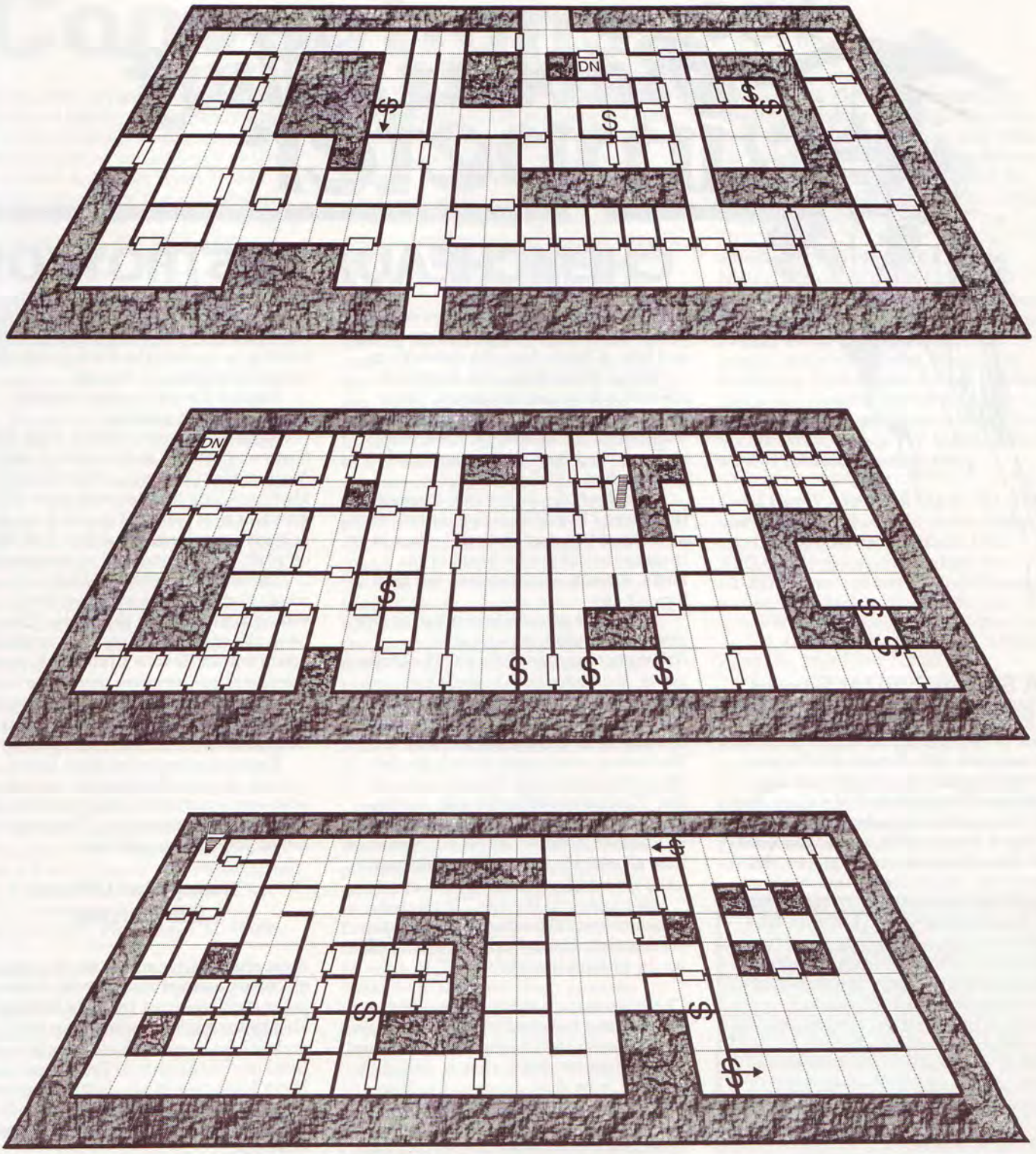
Alzennak was not content to stay with the original formula, so he continued tinkering with the pigments until he finally passed away of old age after several centuries. Before his death, the archmage created an alternative recipe for the marvelous pigments that still bear his name today. Alzennak shared the recipe with several close colleagues, and the magical formula may still be found in a few lost tomes scattered about the Realms. About 5% of *Nolzur's marvelous pigments* found in the Realms today are actually *Alzennak's marvelous pigments.*

Alzennak's marvelous pigments have all of the powers and limitations of *Nolzur's marvelous pigments,* except for the following variations: *Alzennak's pigments* must be tattooed into living supple skin (scaled or excessively hairy skin will prevent the pigments from functioning); the object depicted will not actually take its three-dimensional form until the name "Alzennak" is spoken by the recipient of the tattoo (this is somewhat similar to the 3rd-level wizard spell item); the pigments will maintain their effectiveness for one year or until a *dispel magic* spell is cast before transforming automatically into the object depicted; the pigments must be applied by a tattoo artist (someone with the nonweapon proficiency artistic ability (tattooing); and the pigments are only detectable via *detect magic.*

Adventure Hooks

• Talon's supply of pigments is not unlimited. In exchange for several free *marvelous pigment* tattoos, Talon may decide to hire a band of adventurers to seek out more pots of the *marvelous pigments* and the long-lost magical recipe of Alzennak the Archmage. In the manor vault of Lady Tabatha Whiteoak's former estate may be found clues to the location of Alzennak's abode and laboratory. Alzennak has been dead for centuries, so almost anyone or anything may have occupied his residence in the interim or he may have left ancient traps and wards to guard against intruders.

• Lord Whiteoak VIII will ascend to the family title and seat on the Council of Lords following his elderly father's death. He may wish to eliminate Talon following the birth of his first fully human child to prevent the bastard half-breed from claiming the lordship as first born upon Whiteoak's death. Alternately, if Lord Whiteoak VII and his heir both die in a mysterious hunting accident, Talon's cousins and uncles may try to track him down and eliminate him, as he is a potential (although unlikely) rival for succession. In either case, Talon will need the help of friends (the PCs) to survive, and perhaps claim the title and family fortune as Lord Whiteoak IX (assuming the half-ogre can be persuaded to seek it).



UNINHABITED
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The Ravens Bluff Trumpeter

CHEMCHEAUX DESTROYED!

A Stormy End for Ravens Bluff's Famous Magic Shop

Chemcheaux 223, Ravens Bluff's premier magic shop, was destroyed last night by a freak accident of nature that left the building in cinders.

Fawn Thorin-Wolf, a local hero and part-time Chemcheaux employee, witnessed the shop's destruction. Wolf was scheduled to manage a late-night inventory session and was on her way to work when she noticed what had been a soft rain shower turn instantly into a thunderous downpour. The drenched adventurer watched helplessly as great flashes of lightning cut through the sky just above the business district.

Wolf said one bolt streaked to the earth, striking Chemcheaux 223. A booming clap of thunder knocked her to the street, and when she got up the building was gone.

Wolf said she rushed to where the shop had been, but found only a gaping hole in the ground and piles of rubble. Oddly, she said the buildings to either side of the magic shop were not damaged. The adventurer searched around the ruins, but found only pieces of broken glass, useless and melted weapons, and bits of fabric from the furnishings.

"Gone! Everything was destroyed," she told a Trumpeter reporter. "Mortimer was supposed to have been there, working on the inventory. I searched and searched through the mess and couldn't find him."

Mortimer, the owner and manager of the Ravens Bluff Chemcheaux branch—and one of the most powerful wizards in the city—could not be found at his home. Friends said they had not seen him all day.

Rhodan, a priest who worked at the shop, also could not be located. Attempts to contact Prismal The Outrageous, the supremely-powerful wizard who created Chemcheaux and its several hundred branches, have been unsuccessful. Trumpeter contacts in Waterdeep continue to search for the plane-hopping mage. Reports indicate that Elminster of Shadowdale is also trying to contact The Outrageous One. In addition, a search of the city revealed that all wizards employed by Mortimer have vanished.

"It's a blow to the city," Wolf said. "Chemcheaux 223 catered to adventurers from all across the Vast. What will we do without a magic shop?"

Chemcheaux is a major corporation more than a hundred years old, with franchises in thousands of cities on hundreds of worlds. Each shop is owned by a single individual or company. Mortimer operated the Ravens Bluff branch for about 10 years. His 223 franchise specialized in magical long swords and healing potions—both of which were in demand by local heroes.

The local mage's guild had been a thorn in the business' side throughout its operation. The mages grumbled that the shop sold items too cheaply, making magic available to the general public. However, they are adamant they had nothing to do with the freak storm that caused the business' demise.

Some of the city's noted wizards morn the shop's passing.

"I always enjoyed visiting with Mortimer and looking at his wares," said Ambassador Carrague. "And he was always willing to trade with me—I'd give him new potions I'd mixed up, and he'd give me things the labels had fallen off of. It was a wonderful arrangement."

The city's Ministry of Magic, of which Carrague is a member, has vowed to investigate the storm. They have also stated that perhaps another group within Ravens Bluff would begin a magic shop. However, given the fate of the Magic Shop, the individuals would have to be brave considering the fate of Chemcheaux.

Trumpeter reporters have heard rumors of powerful wizards—or worse—who were angry over shop practices and were seeking retribution. Those rumors are as yet unsubstantiated.

Trumpeter Offices Burglarized

Soon after the reports of the destruction of Chemcheaux were received, Trumpeter staff returned from the printer's shoppe to discover their offices ransacked and burning. Fortunately, quick thinking on the part of Trumpeter clerk Myra Miller saved the files from complete destruction. Unfortunately, all reports on last summer's meteor crisis were lost.

The following morning, a triple-lightning bolt symbol of Talos was discovered branded into an outer wall of the Trumpeter building? Coincidence? The staff of this publication reserve judgement until further evidence.

Conventions

OrcCon, Feb. 17-20 Los Angeles, CA—All types of family, strategy, adventure, board, role-playing, miniatures, and computer gaming can be found at OrcCon at the LA Airport Hyatt Hotel. Find bargains at the flea markets, auction, and in the exhibitor area. Contact: Strategicon, P.O. Box 3849, Torrance, CA 90510-3849.

Egyptian Campaign, March 3-4 Carbondale, IL—The S.I.U.C. Strategic Games Society hosts this grand convention in the 2nd floor ballrooms of the SIU student center. Cost is $12 at the door, $10 pre-registration. No event fees. Events include Network tournaments, such as the AD&D game and Living City. Also featured—*Magic: The Gathering, Car Wars, BattleTech, Shadowrun, Vampire, WarHammer 40K, Civilization,* and many others. Guest of honor is the Network's own Dave Gross. Write: Egyptian Campaign, c/o S.I.U.C. Strategic Games Society, Office of Student Development, 3rd Floor Student Center, Carbondale, IL 62901-4425. Call Joel Nadler at 618-529-4630 or 1-800-297-2160.

Concentric, March 3-5 Chicago, IL—The Center of the Universe beckons! Our line-up includes: Network events, Living City, *BattleTech*, a *Space Hulk* spectacular, *Puffing Billy,* a special *Thieves' World* game with guest player Lynn Abbey, board games, computer games, and much, much more! Artist guest is Larry Elmore. Pre-registration until Feb. 15 is $13, at the door: $17. Write: Concentric Circle Inc., 114 Euclid Box 287, Park Ridge, IL 60068.

PointCon II, March 4-5 Stevens Point, WI—This fine festival of gaming will feature role-playing, strategy, and card games, plus other events such as miniatures judging and seminars on game-related topics. Write: Gamers Anonymous of Stevens Point, Box 41 University Activities Office, University Center UWSP, Stevens Point, WI 54481.

CosCon, March 10-12 Butler, PA—The Circle of Swords Gaming Guild is sponsoring a festival of gaming at the Days Inn Conference Center in Butler, PA. Guest of honor is Jean Rabe. Featured: first-run Living City and Benefit events, board games, miniature events, free-form role-playing, and many, many, more games too numerous to mention. We will also have a dealer's room, new game demonstrations, and other special activities. Don't miss the action! Registration is $15 until Feb. 25, $20 at the door. Send a SASE to: Circle of Swords, P.O. Box 2126, Butler PA 16003.

Spring Revel, March 16-19 Rosemont, IL—The gaming is non-stop at this four-day extravaganza of role-playing, board gaming, and miniature excitement at the Ramada Hotel O'Hare! Little Wars is the war-gaming half of the con, and Spring Revel covers the role-playing events. Look for the premier of an Ed Greenwood AD&D game tournament; three new Living City tournaments, including a two-round event where everyone advances; the first Network-sponsored *Masque of the Red Death* event; a BOOT HILL® Benefit, and much, much more! Visit with the guests of honor, shop in the large dealer's room. Get the special room rates of $58 by calling the Ramada Hotel O'Hare at 708-827-5131. To register or for more information, write: Spring Revel, Keith Polster, P.O. Box 27, Theresa, WI 53091.

ConnCon, March 24-26 Danbury, CT—The 7th annual ConnCon boasts a vast number of games, including role-playing, miniatures, card, and board games. Featured are many first-run Network events, including Living City, Living Jungle, and Virtual Seattle. Other campaign-style events include *Mercs & Mechs* and *Tales Heard at a Miskatonic Reunion.* Don't miss the AD&D game, *Magic: The Gathering,* SPELLFIRE™ game, *BattleTech,* and more. Guests of honor include Jean Rabe and Sam Lewis. For more info: ConnCon, P.O. Box 444, Sherman, CT 06784-0444.

Milcon '95, March 26-27 Québec, Canada—This convention will be held at the Còllege Militaire Royal de St-Jean in St-Jean-sure-le-Richelieu. Events include three AD&D game scenarios: Forgotten Ties (3-round elimination), Desecrated Grove (2-round), and Death Comes Easy (1-round) along with a *Magic: The Gathering* tournament. Registration: Free for DMs, $5 at the door. Prizes for best players and DMs for each major event. Write to: Milcon '95, c/o Eric Cloutier, 5 Sqn CMR St-Jean, Richelain Qc, J0J 1R0, or through e-mail to: cloutier@cmr.ca.

Pentecon VII, March 31-April 2 Ithaca, NY—Join us for 47 hours of gaming fun! The convention will feature AD&D game, RPGA Network sanctioned events, *GURPS, SFB*, various war games, and ever-present *Magic: The Gathering.* Our regular fiction, art, and miniature contests will be held. For further details contact: Kristin Mayo, 219 Willard Way, Ithaca, NY 14850, or by e-mail at pentecon@cornell.edu.

Gold Con V, April 15 Clark, NJ—This one-day fest will be held at the American Legion Post on Westfield Ave. RPGA Network events include two AD&D games and two Living City scenarios. Play *Magic: The Gathering, Space Hulk, Talisman, Civilization*, and *Axis & Allies*. Write: Gold Con, 3 Foursome Dr., Marlboro, NJ 07746.

Enigmacon 8, April 22-23 Los Angeles, CA—This convention will be held at Ackerman Union on the campus of the university of California, Los Angeles. It will feature a sanctioned **Magic: the Gathering** event and RPGA Network AD&D tournaments, in addition to game demos and special guests. Please arrive by 10:00 a.m. for registration.

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For more information, contact: Thuong Pham, 500 Landfair Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024. Or call: (310) 208-1722.

Cruise Con, April 27-30—The Ultimate Role-Playing Experience Awaits! Three days, three nights on Carnival's luxury liner, the *Fantasy.* 1st-Class gaming, theme scenarios, paragon-level events, Network tournaments, Living City, and much more. Visit the islands with our low-priced package deals. Don't miss this once in a life time convention! Guests of honor: Jean Rabe, Darwin Bromley, and Wizards of the Coast representatives. For more information, call: 216-673-2117.

SpringCon '95, April 28-30 Lincoln, NE—Join us for the fifth annual SpringCon. Featured events include a miniatures painting contest, *Warhammer 40K, BattleTech, Fantasy Battles,* and many others. Network-sanctioned events include *Amber,* Living City, Living Jungle, AD&D game Paragon, AD&D game Grandmasters, *Paranoia,* and others. For more info, write: SpringCon, c/o Spellbound, 16th & W, Lincoln, NE 68501.

DemiCon VI, May 5-7 Des Moines, IA—Looking for a little magic? 24-hour gaming? Come to Iowa's premier sci-fi con. Filking, masquerades, art shows, guests, Network events, and more. For information write: The Adventurers of Central Iowa, 1304 Boyd St., Des Moines, IA 50316 or phone 515-266-2358.

CONtario, June 3-4 Toronto, ON—We are proud to present a large selection of Network events, including new Living City events, a benefit event, a masters event, and Virtual Seattle. Also featured are the Canadian AD&D Team Championship, various *Magic* tournaments, a *Vampire* interactive, and a *BattleTech* Bloodname tournament. CONtario will be held at the Triumph Howard Johnson on Keele Street (at Highway 401). Registration is $8/day or $12/weekend before April 1. For more information, write to: CONtario, 222 The Esplanade, Suite 431; Toronto, ON, Canada, M5A 4M8, or call: (416) 360-8395.

Ben Con '95, June 23-25 Denver, CO—The first gaming convention devoted to charity! Features include an art show, games auction, seminars, dealers' room, a *Magic: The Gathering* room, RPGA Network events, a Vampire ball and blood drive, *Call of Cthulhu, Shadowrun, Earthdawn, M:tG* tournaments, war, board, and miniatures games, and much more! Non-gaming events, too, so bring the whole family! Margaret Weis is the guest of honor with *M:tG* artists, game designers, and a few surprise guests also in attendance. Located at the Sheraton Hotel in Lakewood, discounted room rates are available for convention-goers. Call (800) 325-3535 to reserve a room, and be sure to mention Ben Con. For additional convention info, contact: Ken Ritchart, 1024 Sagebrush Way, Louisville, CO 80027, or call (303) 665-7062. Ask about VIP registrations.

Grand Game Con 95, July 15 & 16 Grand Rapids, MI—Godfrey Lee Middle School, 1335 Lee Street, SW. We are having the following events: RPGA Network events (Living City, Living Jungle, Virtual Seattle, *Shadowrun,* AD&D Game and AD&D Masters), AD&D Game, *GURPS, BattleTech, Rifts, Magic:The Gathering* (sanctioned), *Jyhad, Star Wars, Call of Cthulhu, Shadowrun,* and much more. Doors open at 8 a.m. Events begin at 9 a.m. Admission is $8 for one day, $15 for two. For info or to judge, contact: Leon Gibbons, 13910 Olin Lakes Road, Sparta, MI 49345-9524.

Dexcon IV, July 20-23 Somerset, NJ—Double Exposure, Inc. once again brings you Dexcon, New Jersey's largest gaming convention, held at the Somerset Raddison Hotel. RPGA Network events include AD&D game, DARK SUN® setting, RAVENLOFT setting, *Paranoia, Call of Cthulhu,* and *Shadowrun.* Living City events planned include a three-round feature, a two-rounder, and two single rounds, all first run. There will also be a Living City Special event for 6th Level characters and higher. Finally, a Masters/Grandmasters/Paragon event, as well as a Living Jungle event will be included. Other activities include war gaming, interactive role-playing, Sugarfest, anime, the famous con suite, and miniature recreations of famous *Star Wars* battles. Visit the huge dealer room and join non-stop *Magic: The Gathering* tournaments. For more information, call (718) 881-4575.

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Next Issue:

Bugging the Hunters, by Gregory W. Detwiler
New alien monsters for the BUGHUNTERS® setting.

In the Footsteps of Gulliver, by James Patrick Buchanan
AD&D® Game information for one of the most fantastic journeys of literature.

Weasel Games, by Jenny "Mrs. Weasel" Smith
The Grand Weasel steps aside for a few words from the ... er, *opposition.*

Living Galaxy, by Roger E. Moore
The final installment of the TV campaigns mini-series.

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Ibrandul, the "God of the Dry Depths," and his worshippers in the Underdark.

Plus slades's Corners, magical items, your letters, and more!

Classifieds

Arizona: Well met, gamers! I am a 17-year-old gamer looking to join or start a gaming club with others of any age, sex, or race. I'm experienced in the AD&D® game, D&D® game, DRAGONLANCE®, and FORGOTTEN REALMS® settings. I'm also willing to play other science fiction RPGs. If interested, contact me at 3171 Shosohone #3A, Prescott, AZ 86301.

California: Looking for players and DMs for campaigning on weekends in the GREYHAWK®, FORGOTTEN REALMS, AL-QADIM®, RAVENLOFT®, and DRAGONLANCE settings. AD&D 2nd edition rules with original edition revisited. Male or female, 20-30 years old, good attitude. Orange, CA. Call (714) 517-4447 and leave a message.

For Sale: AD&D game modules (all worlds) and hardback books. Excellent condition. For a price list, send a SASE to: M.W. Drisy, 1013 North Lime Street, Lancaster, PA 17602.

For Sale: *The Official Book of King's Quest* and the games *Silent Service, King's Quest II: To Heir is Human*, and *Space Quest I: The Sarien Encounter*, all for the Tandy 1000/1200/3000. Write to Ryan Staake, 7465 Cement City Road, Brooklyn, MI 49230.

For Sale: Many single color *Magic: the Gathering* cards for sale. Always have the color of cards you want! The prices are as follows: Revised deck (60 cards) $10, Booster pack (16 cards) $3. Additional shipping cost. Please specify color when ordering. Checks or money orders only. Anthony Gibbs, 477 Roush Lane, Cheshire, OH 45620.

General: I am selling the new remake of the classic DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. I am also looking for DRAGON® Magazine #200. Please send replies and offers to: Alex Hong, 2100 S. 2nd Avenue, Arcadia, CA 91006.

General: Large game collection for sale or trade. Included are various RPGs and components, most in mint condition. Board and war games, too. Please send large SASE for info (some of the products: BUCK ROGERS® game, old *Cyberpunk* stuff, TOP SECRET/S.I.™, *Torg*, plus computer games for the Amiga). If interested in trading, send me your lists. Also interested in correspondence with Spanish-speaking and Latin American gamers. Thanks, and Hasta luego! Alexi Díaz-Pérez, PSC 2 Box 1187, APO AA 34002.

General: Join the Dungeoneers Gaming Society! We are one of Pennsylvania's fastest-growing and most interactive gaming networks. Join from anywhere in the country. Take advantage of our unique House system. Participate in DGS tournaments at local conventions. Earn Player Points and GM Points year-round. Enjoy special club benefits. Subscribe to *Quest* Newszine (our official club periodical). DGS and its Houses host role-playing, live action, and table games. Membership is free! Send SASE for membership information: DGS, c/o Jennifer Martiré, 1755 Potomac Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216-1948. Local gamers call: (412) 343-6226.

Michigan: I'm looking for people in the Lansing or Flint Area who like to play the AD&D game, PLANESCAPE™ or DRAGONLANCE settings. Write to Scott Hosler, 1422 Donald Street, Owosso, MI 48867.

Pennsylvania: My name is Frank Kansky, and I'm new to the Network. I am looking for some members in the Westmoreland County area of Pennsylvania to start a Network Club. I would also like to find a pen pal. I'm interested in the Living City but have no idea how it works. Any information will do! Please contact me at: Frank Kansky, Jr., 116 Bryan Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601.

Pennsylvania: I am 14 years old and relatively new to the Network. I'm looking for other teenage gamers in need of another player. I prefer to play the AD&D game, but am willing to learn other systems. Contact me: Matt Acklin, 29 Chambers Avenue, Greenville, PA 16125. Or call: (412) 588-2403

Play-by-Mail: Looking for a few good runners to kick off a *Shadowrun* 2nd Edition PBM. Interested parties can write or call: Phillip Parsons, P.O. Box 56, Bay City, TX 77404-0056, (409) 245-2761.

Ravens Bluff: Calhoun the troubadour seeks help building a lodge outside town. Any old adventuring associates, carpenters, engineers, stonemasons, blacksmiths, miners, or spellcasters with mud to rock, stone shape, or wall of stone spells are welcome. Agriculturalists, fishermen, hunters, and brewers are also welcome. Pay will be a place to stay/hide out once the place is finished. Interested parties should write: Vince Lehto, P.O. Box 1321, Smyrna, TN 37167-1321.

Trading: Trade the RPG stuff you're through with for someone else's stuff you want. Computer-matching "want & need" lists on magazines, modules, books,and TSR cards. Send in your list to: John Kittrel, 2183 Buckingham Road, Richardson, TX 75081. Phone: (214) 530-6251, FAX: (214) 644-0856. The service is free, but please include 56¢ in stamps for the current trades list.

Wanted: Looking for AD&D game products in good condition, both first and second editions, as well as D&D® game products. Please send a list of items and prices to: Rémi Bilodeau, Box 12 RR #4, North Bay, Ontario, Canada, P1B 8G5.

Wanted: Help, fellow gamers! I need the original edition AD&D game PLAYERS HANDBOOK, DUNGEON MASTER® GUIDE, MONSTROUS MANUAL™, and any other original edition AD&D game material that you may wish to sell. Please send price list to: Frankie Wishart, P.O. Box 1949, Woodstock, New Brunswick, Canada, EOJ-2B0.

Wanted: RPG collections. Mainly interested in AD&D Game product lines, but will consider all inquiries. Send lists to V. Daniel, 3725 Whispering Brook, Wichita, KS 67220.

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